DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 448 600 FL 026 522

AUTHOR	Greis, Naguib
TITLE	Aspects of Modern Egyptian Arabic: Its Structure, Humor, Proverbs, Metaphors, Euphemisms and Common Expressions.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	90p.
PUB TYPE	Creative Works (030) -- Information Analyses (070)
LANGUAGE	English, Arabic
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Arabic; Foreign Countries; *Humor; Language Usage; *Metaphors; Oral Language; *Proverbs; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; *Standard Spoken Usage; Written Language
IDENTIFIERS	*Egypt

ABSTRACT

The Arabic language used in Egypt is traditionally divided into two major types: classical and colloquial. The idea is that classical or literary Arabic is to be found mostly in formal writing and speaking, whereas colloquial Arabic is used mainly in daily conversation. When it comes to actual usage, however, this distinction is not always clearly observed. In this study an attempt is made to describe the general characteristics of the language, its humor, proverbs, metaphors, euphemisms, and common expressions as actually used by educated Egyptians in both oral and written communication. Examples are provided from recent periodicals, newspapers, and popular literature. A well-organized sampling of different kinds of modern Egyptian Arabic writing with the literal English translation and the English language equivalent is provided--for example, the Arab proverb "in repetition there is learning" and "practice makes perfect." (KFT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 448 600

ASPECTS OF MODERN EGYPTIAN ARABIC

اللّغَه المصْريّه الحَديثَه

Its Structure, Humor, Proverbs, Metaphors, Euphemisms and Common Expressions

Naguib Greis

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Naguib Greis
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

2000

FL026522

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Aspects of Modern Egyptian Arabic

The Arabic language used in Egypt is traditionally divided into two major types: classical (*fusha*) الفُصْحي and colloquial (*'a:mmiyya*) العامِيّة. The idea is that literary or classical Arabic (sometimes used interchangeably) is to be found mostly in formal writing and speaking while colloquial Arabic is informal and is used mainly in daily conversation. When it comes to actual usage, however, this distinction is not always clearly oberved. In this study, an attempt is made to describe the general characteristics of the language, its humor, proverbs, metaphors, euphemisms and common expressions as actually used by educated Egyptians in both oral and written communication. This language may be considered as modern Egyptian Arabic. Examples are provided from recent periodicals, newspapers and popular literature. (For transliteration, please see Symbols p 33.)

The Language of Modern Egypt

Egyptian Arabic (EA) reveals a wide variety of features borrowed from the past and the present, from native as well as foreign languages. While there are those who publicly resist the idea of language change, there is evidence that EA has continued to change and the change is gradually being recognized especially in recent times. Today there is a vast body of literature in Egyptian Arabic that includes drama, poetry, stories and songs. At the same time, dualism, diaglossia or what is called the conflict between the proponents of colloquial and the defenders of classical continues to be a topic of interest in contemporary writing.

Two Perspectives:

Historically, it is since the sixties that the apparent conflict has been particularly emphasized.This may be largely due to the drastic political and social upheaval triggered by the Revolution of July 1952. One perspective is represented by

Naffusa Z. Sa`eed in her book تاريخ الدعوة إلي العامية وآثارها في مصر *(The History of the Call for Colloquial and Its Impact in Egypt, 1964*). The book, which is based on a doctoral dissertation, examines the motives of the movement to use colloquial in writing and its history since the end of the nineteenth century. From the author's point of view, the motives are attributed to colonialism, illiteracy and the separatist national movements.

A samilar notion is expressed thirty -four years later by Shawqi Def (de:f) شوقي ضيف the chairman of the Egyptian Language Academy. In the March 15, 1998 issue of *AKHBAR ELADAB* (p8).

Def is reported to have called for 'fighting' colloquial Arabic and having the young learn by heart sections from the Koran. He feels that the university courses should be taught in Arabic. In his view, no other nation except the Arab nation has abandoned its language in favor of a foreign language to teach university courses.

Another perspective considers the need for colloquial use in writing as a matter of communication and accessibility to the general public. One well-known representative writer, Yusif al-Sibai يوسف السباعي , is acutely aware of the language problem. He indicates that the Ministry of Education did not adopt his books for use in public schools because they included colloquial. In his book السقّا مات *(The Water Carrier Died, 1975*) , he defends his use of colloquial on the grounds that he writes " for the general public rather than for the rhetoricians and eloquent elite". Al-Sibai supports his view by referring to his uncle's comment on Naguib Mahfouz's زقاق المد ق *(Al- Madaqq Alley).* His uncle. who was a well-known pasha, felt that Mahfouz's story was excellent except that the dialogues should have been presented in colloquial. It is interesting to note that al-Sibai

uses a mixture of literary, colloquial and even English terms in his stories.

Variations in Styles and Levels of Usage :

To understand the nature of modern Egyptian Arabic with its variety of levels and styles, three basic terms need to be first clearly defined, namely classical, literary and colloquial. "Classical" usually refers to the form of Arabic that strictly adheres to the traditional rules of Koranic patterns as set by the old grammarians علماء النحو with no attempt to accept modern or foreign elements in syntax or vocabulary. The use of classical in the strict sense of the term is rather limited and may be found mainly in certain religious writings. "Literary" is more flexible and accommodates changes in vocabulary and sentence patterns but largely conforms to the traditional rules where such distinctions as masculine vs feminine, dual vs plural, nominative vs accusative are carefully observed. "Colloquial" refers to the informal use of spoken Arabic where some of the traditional rules and distinctions are not observed and foreign terms may be easily adopted. Needless to say, there are usage variations in styles and levels in different types of publications. Geographical and social dialects may also be noticed.

Suggestions for Dealing with the Language Problem:

Various suggestions to solve the problem of classical vs colloquial have been offered. As far as translation is concerned, Mohammad Anani, in an article in the *AKHBAR ELADAB* issue of January 28, 1996 p13, suggests "the use of the classical that is full of colloquial". It is not clear what he actually means. Another suggestion is to use "the third language" where the written forms, which partially represent the sounds, can be read either as colloquial or as literary. Further discussion of this will be provided later.

Arabic Writing and Sounds

At this point, it is important to understand the relationship between the Arabic sound system and the Arabic writing system. While the sound system is a combination of consonontal roots and vocalic patterns, the writing system primarily represents the consonants and only secondarily the vowels in the form of optional diacritics that are provided mainly in religious and special texts. Thus, the written forms are in a sense a kind of shorthand that assumes a knowledge of the structure of Arabic on the part of the reader to understand the text.

It should be pointed out that among the important features of the literary as distinguished from the colloquial are the pronunciation of /d/ ذ (similar to the initial sound in 'the') vs z / d , q vs the glottal stop ء and inflection or case ending الإعراب /*'al'i`ra:b/* which is not easily mastered even by many educated Egyptians. In fact, it may be said that Egyptians learn classical and literary Arabic as a second dialect. The following examples of written patterns that can be read either as colloquial or literary are taken from Mahfouz's ملحمة الحرافيش (*Al-harafi:sh Epic*, 1977) : (1) كفي الله الشر /kafa lla shsharr / kafa lla:hu shsharra / (God forbid !) (2) يتحرش بي أهل الشر- /yit harrash biyya 'ahl ishsharr / yataharrashu biya 'ahlu shsharri (Evil people provoke me.) - مقرفص /m'arfas_ / muqarfasun / (crouching)

One crtic, Pierre Cachia in *An Overview of Modern Arabic Literature* (Ediburgh University Press, 1990) , discusses "The Use of Colloquial in Modern Arabic Literature" in ch 4. He feels that the two idioms "classical and colloquial " are valid. However, he tends to favor the classical form of language in his statement : "If one had to choose between the one and the other, there is little doubt which would be the better bargain" (p. 74). He points out that works in

colloquial are neither recognized by the Egyptian Academy nor qualified for government grants.

An entirely different view is that of Osman (formally */othman/* Sabry, a former judge, who proposes the use of colloquial in writing as the modern "Egyptian language". To demonstrate his idea, he published in September 1965 رحلة في النيل */rihla finni:l/* (*A Voyage on the Nile*) a humorous story written in the proposed "Egyptian language". In a rather lengthy introduction, Sabry explains his view and describes his story as the first " literary story" written in the language understood by the general public. He further indicates that this Egyptian Arabic is the national language used throughout Egypt.

A year earlier, Sabry suggested adopting a new alphabet based on Roman letters and the phonemic principle. His book نحو أبجدية جديدة */nahwa 'abgadiyya gadi:da/* (*Toward a New Alphabet* published by the Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop in Cairo, 1963) was inspired by the Turkish use of Roman letters in 1938. Another type of alphabet he proposed was based on changing the shape of the current letters. He tried to rebut the major arguments of the opposition. These include the sacredness of the Arabic letters, the advantage of the abbreviated Arabic writing system and maintainting the link between the past and the present. But realistically Sabry was quite aware of the strong opposition of the traditional forty members of the Language Academy to any of his innovations.

Looking objectively at the situation, however, one must distinguish between what the critics would like to see and what actually happens. In spite of vehement opposition, there have been significant changes in vocabulary and syntax in the written Arabic language. M. Hasan Abdel-Aziz discusses some of these changes in the press based on a study of the daily newspapers he conducted between 1970

and 1975. His short book لغة الصحافة المعاصرة *The Language of Contemporary Press* published by Dar al-Maarif in Cairo, 1978) touches on the prevalent use of colloquial especially in sports, popular interviews and women's sections (p.60) .

Abdel-Aziz feels that the influence of European languages on the press far exceeds that of colloquial. Exaggerating the influence of European languages, he rather facetiously remarks that some contemporary linguists think that in a couple of generations Arabic will become a member of the European family of languages.

A more conservative view is expressed by an Arab conference and reported in *Akhbar Eladab* issue of March 15, 1998 (p 8). It maintains that the efforts of journalism, especially since the beginning of the third part of the last century, have created a new classical Arabic that combines both the inherited Arabic and the colloquial of everyday usage. It further points out that this has helped to promote the spread of the new Egyptian classical Arabic not only in Egypt but also throughout the Arab world. This view may be compared with Anani's referred to earlier.

But perhaps one of the the most outspoken advocates of language change is Salama Musa, a socialist writer. In his book البلاغة العصرية واللغة العربية *Contemporary Rhetoric and the Arabic Language* , 1964 4th ed. , Musa calls for adapting Arabic to meet the needs of the changing society. At the beginning of his book, he refers to the story of the Indian 'wolf child' found in 1920 with a limited vocabulary that did not exceed 46 words as an example of the close relationship between language development and social interaction.

Musa points to two important revolutions with implications for language use, namely scientific thinking and world communication. He refers to H.G.Wells' idea that English is a good candidate for an international language because of

the simplicity of ' its grammar and absence of gender'. He also refers to Ogden's proposed Basic English of 946 words. Musa suggests that modern Arabic should be reformed. In his view, adopting the Roman alphabet in writing would move Arabic about a thousand years ahead. His other important suggestion is that scientific terms should be borrowed without change. He feels that the Arabic Language Academy is wasting time and resources by trying to find Arabic words for foreign terms.

Change and Borrowing:
The change involving the use of colloquial in fiction is quite noticeable in the 1960's. For example, Abdel-Rahman al-Sharqawi , a popular writer, presents the dialogues in his novel قلوب خالية *(Empty Hearts)* , 1965 in colloquial.

It is interesting to note here the distinction he makes between Cairene and rural Arabic (p.13) and between polite and impolite styles (p. 20). His characters reveal their origin, whether urban or rural, through the type of Arabic they use.

Modern literary Arabic is interspersed with colloquial and foreign terms. At times the literary form seems to be a kind of translation of the colloquial expression. At other times, it is a translation or straight borrowing of foreign terms, which reveals the overwhelming influence of foreign languages especially English. A list of examples from a variety of sources as recent as 1996 is provided below.

(3) An old window on the future	شباك قديم علي المستقبل
The law of the jungle	قانون الغابة
Technique	تقنية /التكنيك
Internet	الإنترنت
Landmarks	علامات الطريق

Flashback	الفلاش باك
Blank check	شيك علي بياض
Folklore	الفولكلور (instead of Ar. الأدب الشعبي)
Irrational	اللامعقول

Expressions translated from colloquial idioms can be found in Mahfouz's writings:

(4) لك عيناي يا ست أم حميده (From زقاق المدق *Al-Madaqq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz : Certainly Madam! [Lit. You have my two eyes lady mother of Hamida.])

(5) مقطوعين من شجره - مقرفص (From ملحمة الحرافيش *Alharafi:sh Epic* by N. Mahfouz : Abandoned , crouch)

(6)...ولكن ينبغي أن نعرف رأسنا من قدمنا...(From بداية ونهاية *A Beginning and an End* by Mahfouz:But we should know better...)

(7) لا يعرف رأسه من رجليه (From اللص والكلاب *The Robber and the Dogs* p.70 by Mahfouz : He knows nothing.)

It will be noticed that the foreign words tend to be rendered in their spelling pronunciation forms,e.g. folklore (8) الفولكلور , salmon السالمون .In addition to the borrowed expressions, e.g (9). ، الستينات for 'the sixties', السبعينات for 'the seventies', we notice the use of new conventions such as the abbreviation د. before a name for Dr.or ت. for tr.(translation/translated)- ا. د. for Professor Dr . There is also a tendency to use the masculine title for a female, e.g. (10) مدير instead of مديرة the feminine for" director", قنصل for "consul f." Another feature is the use of the last name instead of both first and last names. Thus, referring to the Foreign Minister Amr Musa, *Al-Ahram* newspaper states قال موسي "Musa said..."

A careful examination of modern Egyptian writing makes it abundantly clear that there is a great deal of mixing of colloquial, foreign, Koranic and literary patterns. There is hardly any pure classical in modern Egyptian Arabic in the strict sense of the term. The proportion of colloquial varies depending on the type of text. As will be shown later in some plays, only the stage directions are in 'literary' Arabic while the dialogues are entirely in 'colloquial'. It should be pointed out, however, that there is often a mixture of varieties throughout. Thus it is not uncommon that we find the writer using a literary or even a Koranic pattern in a 'colloquial' dialogue.

Examples of Recent Changes:
One current publication that reflects some of the changes is the weekly أخبار الأدب *Akhbar Eladab* (*The News of Literature*), a periodical published by أخبار اليوم *Akhbar Elyom*. The following observations are based on an examination of the November 23, 1997 issue.

Use of foreign terms : (Heading)
(11) في أمريكا : شعر السوبرماركت يحفظ الهوية العربية (In America : Supermarket Poetry maintains Arab Identity.)

Change in Word Order :
(12) لأنه كاتب روائي "موضوعي" بامتياز رفض نجيب محفوظ علي الدوام كتابة سيرته الذاتية (Because he is an "objective" novelist *par excellence*, Naguib Mahfouz has always refused to write his own personal autobiography.)

Use of Colloquial in Dialogues:
In تحت السلم (*Underneath the Staircase*), a short story by the late writer Saad-Eddin Wahba (pp 16-17) , the dialogues except the following question are in colloquial:
(13) ما اسمك ؟ ***masmak*** (What is your name?) instead of
اسمك إيه ؟ *'ismak 'e:h?*

These changes are also noticeable in the leading daily newspaper الأهرام *Al-Ahram.* In the November 30, 1997 issue, it is interesting to note that the Editor-in-Chief Ibrahim Nafi is reported (p.3) to have emphasized the importance of accommodating technological changes. A colloquial or a new foreign term is usually put within quotation marks, e.g. (14)
" النقلة" (move) , "الدسك" (desk), while commonly used foreign words are integrated into the text, e.g.(15) الكومبيوتر (computer), اليونسكو (UNESCO). The use of English is found especially in advertising where an announcement may be presented entirely in English. To represent a non-Arabic sound, e.g. /v/ three dots instead of one are sometimes put over the ف letter in words such as (16) شيفروليه ، فيلات (Chevrolet, villas) . For /j/ three dots may be put beneath the letter ج as in جاهين .

Headings may reveal change in structure, e.g. (17) دفاعا عن الحيوانات (In Defense of Animals) , !! كي تقنع أمريكا وترضي (That America May be Satisfied and Pleased !!)

Another publication that shows the European influence and the mixture of literary and colloquial styles is Gazibiyya Sidqi's book البلدي يؤكل *Al-baladi yu'kal.* The title itself is a popular colloquial phrase that implies approval of native products. Ms Sidqi's book (published by *Akhbar Elyom* Organization, 1976) consists of six short stories depicting cultural scenes with related historical and statistical background.

At the beginning, she refers to a song by a popular singer, but then she points out that the same notion of the song had been expressed by Chekov some hundred years earlier. We also notice reference to Picasso and the London Tate Gallery. The interesting part is that she tries to portray life

in typical Egyptian neighborhoods using the native dialects. At one point the characters speak the Alexandrian dialect.

In another story with a popular phrase as a title, حلو يا بلدي *hilw ya baladi* "*Sweet is the Native*!",1978) , Ms. Sidqi sometimes mixes the literary and the colloquial. For example, she uses the two literary forms */da:lika/* ذلك (that *m.*) and */ha:dihi/* هذه (this *f.*) in colloquial patterns :

(p 36) لما انت ياشاطرة مش وش ذلك ... ركبت الاتوبيس قبل هذه المرة ...(18)

(Since you good girl are not like that ... I've taken the bus before this time ...)

A rather different approach is that of Naguib Mahfouz in his book entitled خان الخليلي *Khan El-Khalili* , the name of a popular Cairo district. The story, which echoes autobiographical memories, vacillates between the literary and the colloquial in the dialogues. For example, early in the book we find the colloquial proverb

(19) إللي انكتب علي الجبين لازم تشوفه العين (Lit. What is written on the forehead must be seen by the eye. / What must be must be.)

A little later (p.43) , the same pattern is slightly changed.

...والمكتوب حتما تشوفه العين

We also notice degrees of literary and colloquial usage. This is complicated by the fact that the written form sometimes allows the pattern to be read as either literary or colloquial, e.g.

(20)! أهلا وسهلا بالجار الجديد (Welcome new neighbor !)

At other times the colloquial pattern is translated to a literary form, e.g.(p 77)

(21) " لا قطع الله لنا من عادة " (May God preserve our custom !)

As mentioned before, a literay pattern may occur in a colloquial context, e.g.
(22) أعوذ بالله من الشؤم والتشاؤم (May God forbid bad luck and pessimism !)

Adoption of English terms also occurs on pp.44,45 :
(23) "تسكس أبيل" (sex appeal) ; (24) "تعالي يا دارلنج" (Come, darling) . At the same time there is a Koranic quotation , e.g. p.7
(25) " ولاتغلل يدك إلي عنقك ولا تبسطها كل البسط (Do not be too stingy or too generous.)

In his story اللص والكلاب *The Robber and the Dogs* (1973) , Mahfouz seems to be translating the colloquial of dialogue with its metaphors into literary forms: (p 14)
(26) حمدا لله علي سلامتك ! (Lit. Thank God for your safety ! [A pattern used to welcome a person]) ,
(27) ما فات فات (What is gone is gone.)
(28) ادخلوا في الموضوع (Come to the point !)
(29) قال أحد ماسحي الجوخ : بنتك في الحفظ والصون (One of those currying favor said," Your daughter is in good hands.")

It is, however, in written plays that Egyptian Arabic is particularly interesting. Consider, for example, مسرحية الفراشة(The *Butterfly* , a play by Rashad Rushdy published by الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب (General Egyptian Book Association , Cairo, 1975). In the Introduction, Rushdy discusses the influences on his writing such as Shakespeare, Chekov and T. Williams. No comment, however, is made on the type of language he uses. He follows the convention of putting the stage directions between parentheses in literary Arabic and the dialogues in colloquial. It should be pointed out that reading the colloquial assumes, apart from the context, native-like competence on the part of the reader especially

as no diacritics are used to represent the vowel sounds. For instance, one character (Samiha) says:
(30) أروح القع جنتي علي الناس (Am I going to impose myself on other people?) Not even the question mark is provided. Only one with native or native-like ompetence can supply the necessary information to make the pattern in the context completely intelligible.

It can be said that by and large while the proportion of classical, literary and colloquial varies from one writer to the other, there is some mixture of all three varieties in most modern Egyptian Arabic. At the same time, the pervasive influence of interaction with foreign languages, cultures and modern technology on Egyptian life is reflected in language as well as writing .

Lexical and Syntactic Structure of Egyptian Arabic
Egyptian Arabic (EA) can be further characterized in terms of its lexical and structural composition in the context of some general themes. The following analysis is based on sample texts from newspapers, periodicals, short stories and plays published in Egypt in the latter half of the twentieth century. It should be remembered that pronunciation may vary depending on the level of education and geographical location but is assumed to be generally understood by the average Egyptian. Newspapers usually register change more quickly than books. As it will be noticed, some of the books portray events that occurred some twenty years or more earlier even though they may be filtered through the present experience.

Newspapers and Periodicals
A typical Egyptian daily newspaper already mentioned is *AL-AHRAM* الأهرام which is a leading paper throughout Egypt and the Middle East with a long history that goes back to December 27, 1875. Reference is here made to the issues of December 31, 1997 and after. One area that

reveals significant change is advertising where foreign terms are presented in English or English and Arabic. Obviously some knowledge of English is assumed, e.g.

(31) Philips فيلبس , Panasonic , Electrostar الكتروستار .

Sometimes the Arabic translation is given followed by the English term in Arabic in parentheses, e.g.

(32) for "timer" مؤقت زمني (تايمر) .

English terms may be simply adopted in Arabic, e.g. (33) لكمبيوتر ا *'alkumpyutar*(computer)، الريموت كنترول *'alrimo:t Kuntro:l* (remote control) .

Colloquial is sometimes used in advertising , e.g.

(34) في رمضان .. الشغل مش بيقف لكن .. مفيش تركيز (During Ramadan .. work does not stop but .. there is no concentration.)

The influence of foreign languages and cultures, especially that of American English, is also clear. Thus one television program called صباح الخير يا مصر (Good Morning Egypt) is patterned after the American ABC program. Sentence structure may be illustrated from headlines in the issue of February 11, 1998. The most common pattern is Subject - Verb (present tense)- Object /Complement :

(35) روسيا تنقل مساعدتها للعراق عبر الأردن
(Russia sends its aid to Iraq across Jordan)

(36) مونيكا تستعد للشهادة أمام القاضي الفيدرالي غدا
(Monica prepares to testify before the Federal judge tomorrow)

Another sample of current Egyptian papers is the already mentioned weekly periodical *AKHBAR ALADAB / ELADAB* أخبار الأدب (*The News of Literature*) which is published by *AKHBAR ELYOM* أخبار اليوم in Cairo. The following points are made with reference to the two issues of December 21,28 ,

1997. It will be immediately noticed that while *AL-AHRAM* gives the three types of calendar, namely Arabic, Coptic and Gregorian, *AKHBAR ELADAB* gives only the Arabic and the Gregorian. It will also be noticed that here digits, whether for date or page number, are given in Roman figures so that the Roman and Arabic systems are mixed in presenting the date : December 28, 1997 and Shaban 28, 1418.
(To be read from right to left)

(37) ١٤١٨ من شعبان ٢٨ - ١٩٩٧ من ديسمبر ٢٨

It will also be noticed that the news of literature includes old and recent contributions as well as translations from around the world. The journal also covers both formal and colloquial Arabic. Thus, in one issue, in addition to poetry in formal Arabic there is a poem in colloquial Arabic. The following is the beginning of a poem in colloquial by Dr Abdelqadir Alqut (عبد القادر القط) published in the December 21st issue p.20). It should be mentioned that very few diacritics are provided. Approximate translation is added.

(38) من زمان .. عِشت أحلم A long time ago ... I lived dreaming

وأذكر الماضي البعيد And remembering the distant past

قبل فُرقتنا الطويله من سنين Before our long separation years ago

قبل ما أمشي في سكه ما أعرف Before I walked through a path I didn't Know

فين تودّي ، ونهايتها تبقي Where it led , or its end would be

إمتي ، وتبقي فين ! When and where it would be !

كنت باحلم إيه أقول لك What I was dreaming what to tell you

لو قابلتك من جديد ! If I met you again !

The same issue (p6) includes an interesting article which is part of a series that deals with the change in popular proverbs, their language and images. There are also paintings by Arab and European artists (e.g. one is by an Iraqi residing

in the Netherlands and one is by Picasso.) One quotation is from the French paper *Le Monde* and another is by the nineteenth century historian of Egypt al-Gabarty الجبرتي (d. 1825). All of this clearly shows the vast foreign influence on Egyptian Arabic.

Short Stories and Plays

For further analysis, let us examine works by four different writers. One work is by the well-known Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz who had his degree in philosophy. Although published in 1972, his *Almaraya* المرايا , draws on memories that go back to the thirties and sixties. Moreover, the work, which consists of brief sketches with an autobiographical touch, is narrated in the first person.

The first sketch is that of Ibrahim Aql **ابراهيم عقل** a university professor who obtained his doctorate from the Sorbonne. Reference is made to the political situation at a time when the struggle for independence culminated in the 1952 Revolution. Throughout, Mahfouz reveals his knowledge of Greek and French philosophy. While the sentences are carefully and formally constructed [Verb + Subject + Complement], foreign terms occur and even Biblical patterns are used. Here are examples:

(p6) فقال الأستاذ سالم جبر وهو غائص بجسمه البدين في فوتيل وثير...(39)

Mr. Salim Gabr said while sinking with his overweight body into a comfortable chair .. (The Arabized French word *fauteuil* is used.)

(40) ليس بالكورنيش وحده يحيا الإنسان (Man does not live by Corniche alone.)The sentence is patterned after the famous Biblical expression "Man does not live by bread alone."

The dialog is rendered in formal Arabic : (p16)

(41) أنت ! . كيف حالك ؟ . ماذا تفعل ؟

(You ! How are You? What are you doing?

When I replied, he said, فلما أجبته قال :
"Excuse me, I don't read [the papers].")
لا تؤاخذني فأنا لا أقرآ .

In a sense, Mahfouz translates into formal Arabic not only the colloquial conversation but also some foreign patterns. This is how he ends the story after referring to Ibrahim Aql's death in 1957 leaving a translation of Baudelaire's *The Flowers of Evil* :

- لم يخلق كاتبا ، ولكنه محدث موهوب ، نوع من سقراط ، خص أصدقاءه(42)
الحميمين بزبدة فكره ، وطرح أيسر ما عنده علي الناس
(He was not a born writer, but he was a talented conversationalist, a sort of Socrates that devoted the cream of his thinking to his close friends and left the least of what he had to the public.)

فقلت له
- لعله يحتاج إلي أفلاطون جديد
ليرد له اعتباره
ولكنه اندثر فلم يبق منه إلا مأساة وترجمة نادرة لأزهار
الشر . (Then I said to him,"He may be in need of a new Plato to restore his esteem! However, he is gone leaving nothing but a tragedy and a rare translation of *The Flowers of Evil.*")

One interesting feature of Naguib Mahfouz is the attempt to bridge the generation gap. This is clearly revealed in the story of Bilal Abdu Basyuni بلال عبده بسيوني (p. 51-59). Bilal is a young physician who plans to immigrate to the United States where he can find a better "scientific environment" and more appreciation for research.His sister is planning to be a pharmacist and is also thinking of immigrating to the United States. Mahfouz points out that '*alhigra*' (immigration)

(الهجرة) is a new term in the vocabulary of the young generation. Comparing the two generations, Bilal emphasizes the importance of science rather than political systems in solving human problems. He states his view -or rather Mahfouz's philosophy - in formal Arabic:
(43)

لامنقذ لنا سوي العلم ، لا الوطنية ولا الإشتراكية ، العلم والعلم وحده ، وهو يواجه المشكلات الحقيقية التي تعترض مسير الإنسانية .....

(Nothing will save us but science - neither nationalism nor socialism , but science and science alone as it faces the real problems that impede the march of mankind....)

Toward the end, he reiterates his view:
(44) العلم لغة عالمية أما مهنتنا فألغاز محلية

..

(Science is an international language, but our profession is local puzzles ..)
Referring to the old generation, Mahfouz says:
- نحن الكهول مطالبنا يسيرة ، سعادتي اليومية تتحقق لدي شرب قدح من القهوة(45) باللبن مع قطعتين من البسكوت .. (We the elderly are easy to satisfy; my everyday happiness is fulfilled by drinking a cup of coffee with cream and two biscuits ...) Notice the use of formal Arabic structure with the foreign term *'albaskut* البسكوت"biscuit".

The generation gap is also depicted in the love story of Thurayya Ra'fat ثريا رأفت who represents the new generation. When it comes to marriage, she would rather work than stay at home. She is planning to be a teacher. The narrator wants to propose to her and is negotiating the matter with her older sister. The dialogue is in formal Arabic but with some colloquial expressions: (p63) (46)

وقلت ببراءة

لا أتصور كيف يستقيم أمر البيت إذا تمسكت بالوظيفة

فقالت شقيقتها: وعلام الجهد والتعب؟

فقلت

-إن مرتبي يغنينا عن توظفها ويوفر جهدها للبيت ..

فقالت الأخت ضاحكة :

- رغم ثقافتك فأنت دقة قديمة ...

(I innocently said, "I don't imagine how home would be properly served if she held onto the job ..."
Her sister then asked, " What were all the effort and trouble for ?"
I said, "With my salary, she would not need to work and she could save her effort for home."
Her sister laughingly said,"In spite of your education, you are old-fashioned.") Thurayya, however, wanted to express her own opinion:(47)

سأعمل فيما أهلت نفسي لها حتي النهاية ..

("I'll do what I have prepared myself for till the end ...")
The story concludes with the remark that Thurayya manages to obtain her doctorate and eventually becomes an important inspector at the Ministry of Education.

To what extent does Mahfouz translate colloquial or natural speech into formal Arabic? In the previous dialog, there are lexically only two question words that may be replaced in the natural conversation of an educated Egpytian:
(48) إزاي instead of كيف and وليه instead of وعلام.

However, in some dialogs, the formal can be translated into colloquial as demonstrated in the story of Durriyya Salim درية سالم (p 100-107) :

(49) ولكني أراك دائما منفردة can be translated to ولكن أنا دايما أشوفك لوحدك ("But I always see you by yourself.")

As suggested earlier , pronunciation in formal Arabic indicates inflection for the different cases, but since the writing system -without diacritics - does not clearly show the vowels, it is sometimes possible to read the pattern in more than one way. Some letters such as ق and ظ are pronounced /q/ and / d̲ / in formal Arabic but a glottal stop and /z̲/ or /d̲/ in the colloquial.

Other elements of Egyptian Arabic include proverbs, proverbial sayings, interjectural expressions, idioms and informal as well as formal patterns of usage. In *ALMARAYA* the context is largely that of middle class college educated characters. But while foreign influence is clearly seen, the colloquial conversation is often avoided. Proverbs are sometimes used.

The Third Language

A different approach to the language problem was advocated by Tawfiq al-Hakim توفيق الحكيم (d. 1987) who started his career as a prosecutor and lived to become one of the earliest and best known playwrights . In his play الورطه *The Entanglement (1966)*, he tries to apply his theory of bridging the gap between classical and colloquial Arabic. The protagnist, Yehya, a law professor plans to study crime in action. Al-Hakim's view, which looks linguistically rather simplistic and arbitrary, is put forth in a short article attached to the play. His idea is that the gap between classical and colloquial is not very wide and can be bridged through the active intervention of dialogue writers and the use of what he calls اللغة الثالثة (The Third Language). He suggests that the writer should keep at hand the Arabic dictionary القاموس الوسيط *'alwasi:t̲* published by the Language Academy in order

to consult so that the spoken may be modified to approximate "correct Arabic" . In his view, that "intervention" would also help make the spoken "unified" not only in Egypt but also throughout the Arab countries. He feels that the difference in pronunciation is normal.

According to al-Hakim, "the third language" is the ordinary everyday spoken language, but it is close to "correct Arabic" العربية الصحيحة . He feels that colloquial is doomed to perish and that the gap between the spoken and the written is narrowing. It is with some effort on the part of dialogue writers that the gap is to be effectively bridged. His idea is to have unity in the written text and to allow pronunciation to vary. He draws on his knowledge of French and English where short forms are adopted, e.g. *I'll* instead of *I will/shall* in English and the silent final letters of *dis* and *fait* in French. But in spite of his attempt to use a simplified Arabic, he still feels the need to have it changed or translated to the colloquial in acting.

Unlike Mahfouz, al-Hakim allows more use of foreign and colloquial words such as (50) دا/ ده (this) , إيه (what) , but he uses the formal word لأجل instead of the colloquial word عشان (because) , the negative article ما instead of موش/ مش , مَن instead of مين(who) . All the substitutions are introduced in an attempt to "elevate" the colloquial to the classical. The result is not always felicitous as can be seen in the following excerpt (p 123, 141) where the use of the formal term لأجل (because/ in order to) sounds artificial and awkward in the dialogue:

(51)

شوشو : أيوه ... اشتريته من المحل وأهديته له ... لأجل يدخلني جوه أشوف الخزينه ...

(Shushu : Yes... I bought it at the store and gave it to him as a gift...so that he might let me go inside and see the safe...)

منير : يعني انت حضرت في الوقت المناسب لأجل تقول لنا الكلام دا ؟!

(Munir: So you came at the right time in order to tell us this ?!)

At times, however, the patterns sound natural as in the following dialogue(p41) where the two common sentence patterns used are Verb +Subject +Complement and a Verbless pattern.(52)

شوشو : جهزت لكم السندوتشات

بسبس: والبيره ؟

شوشو :البيره في التلاجه ... علي فكره التلاجه هنا

ماركة نورج ...ممتازه والمطبخ

آخر استعداد! ..

(Shushu : I've prepared the sandwiches for you...
Bisbis : And the beer ? ...
Shushu: The beer is in the refrigerator ... By the way, the refrigerator here is Norg brand ... excellent and the kitchen is fully equipped ! ...)

A different approach is that of the popular writer Yusif Idris who started his career as a physician. He uses formal Arabic in his stories but with more acceptance of the colloquial terms and expressions. In his 1980 collection *I Am the King of the Law of Existence* أنا سلطان قانون الوجود published by Gharib Bookshop مكتبة غريب in Cairo, Idris portrays a romantic encounter in *An Egyptian Gioconda* جيوكندا مصرية . At the beginning, he comments on the gap between language capability and what he describes. The story deals with love between a fourteen year old Muslim boy , Muhammad and a Christian girl, Hanuna, about sixteen who both live in a small community of Muslims and Christians with their different traditions and beliefs. A wide generation gap separates the young **from their parents. There is reference to the use of Arabic in Christian traditions from a Muslim perspective :**

(53) إنجيل .... مكتوب بلغة عربية لها طعمها الخاص ; (**Holy bread**) خبز مقدس

(A Bible ...written in a kind of Arabic that has its special flavor) ...

It will be noticed that Idris' writing includes foreign and colloquial expressions as illustrated by the following passage (p33-34). The name 'Hanuna' is typically Coptic and means kind /compassionate.

(54) أم حنونة .. كثيرا ما دست في جيبي برتقالة ، أو حبات (بون بون)

ودايما تقول سلم علي الست أم محمد

(Hanuna's mother... would often thrust into my pocket an orange or pieces of bonbon. She would always tell me to give her regards to my mother .) The expression الست أم **/'issitt 'umm / followed by the name of the son is a respectful way of referring to a mother.**

In some dialogues, there is a mixture of formal and colloquial (p 34):

(55) قلت لها : إنت كالعدرة مريم . سألتني : كيف ؟

قلت لها : وأنا أراك من النافذة كنت كالعدرة ، بدون المسيح يا حنونة ، انت

حنونة .... أنا المسيح وانت العدرة . خليني مسيحك وآنت عدرتي .

(I said to her, " You are like the Virgin Mary ". ... She asked me, " How?" I said to her, " As I was looking at you through the window, you were like the Virgin without Christ . Hanuna, you are kind .... I am Christ and you are the Virgin . Let me be your Christ and you my Virgin .)

In his plays, Idris usually writes the dialogues in colloquial and the stage directions, as a matter of convention, in formal Arabic. But his description, for example, of the house rooms includes some colloquial and foreign terms in popular usage, e.g. (56) حجرة "القعاد" **(living room),** أودة السفرة **(dining room) ,** ترابيزة الصالون **(salon table) . It is interesting to note that the foreign characters (i.e. the English officers) use formal Arabic.**

Idris' view of plays and the theater is expressed in the Introduction (p5-8) to his play اللحظة الحرجة *The Embarrassing Moment* **(1981 second edition, Cairo: Misr Bookshop). Here the emphasis is placed on the interaction between the actors and the audience. Since a play is designed to be acted not to be read, Idris thinks that the reader must make the effort to recreate the situation.**

While Idris started as a physician, Rashad Rushdi, another popular writer, worked as a professor of English at Cairo University. In the Introduction to two of his plays (الفراشة *The Butterfly* **and** لعبة الحب *The Love Game* **in** مسرح رشاد رشدي *Rashad Rushdi's Theater* **, Cairo: The General Egyptian Book Association, 1981 2nd ed.), Rushdi refers to the native and foreign influences on his writing. Among the foreign influences he includes Shakespeare, Chekov,**

Tennessee Williams, Pirandello and Ionesco. The result is the interplay of native Egyptian culture, modern European styles and concepts especially in the sensitive area of sex and love.

The world of the play ***لعبة الحب*** ***The Love Game shows a world of contrast that*** **is predominantly upper middle class combining the conservative and the liberal, the young and the old, the college educated and the uneducated. Even though the play is written after the abolition of titles in 1952, we still see the use of أفندي "effendi" and the class distinction between servant and master.**

Style Variations and levels are to some extent reflected in language use. For example, the religious tone, however hypocrtical it may be, is expressed by Assisi السيسي , a court clerk, speaking in a typically repetitive manner:

(57) استغفر الله .. استغفر الله (يسبح)

("May God forgive me .. May God forgive me .. (Using the rosary)"

العياذ بالله .. العياذ بالله (مسبحا ذاهلا) **(Using the rosary bewilderedly) God forbid .. God forbid .")**

At one point, Assisi shows his obsequious attitude combined with the religious tone in respoding to Zaki, a physician from a higher and richer class (p175):

(58) ... أنا تحت أمرك يا سعادة الدكتور .. وقد بدأ صوته يرتعش)

عاوز حاعمل .. وربنا أمر بالستر ان الله ستار رحيم ..

"(As his voice started trembling ...) Your Excellency Doctor , I am at your disposal. .. I'll do [just as you wish] ... Our God's command is to protect; God is protective and compassionate."

In addressing their superiors, servants use titles such as بيه , سي **(Mr, Bey) for men and** ست **(Ms/Madam) for women. This is how Esha the maid answers the telephone (p 173):**

(59) ألو .. مين .ازيك يا ست لولا. لا ست نبيلة مش موجودة. آه .. سي

عصام بيه موجود فوق ، أندهولك ؟ طب سعيدة ..

(Hello .. Who is it? .. How are you Ms lula ? No, Ms Nabila is not here.. Yes, Mr Isam Bey is upstairs .. Shall I call him for you ? Well , Good-bye ..)

The choice of terms can be indicative of the degree of formality and the speaker's level of education. For example, we notice the use of حداكم ***hada:kum*** **instead of the more educated** عندكم ***`andukum*** **(at your place) ,** واد ***wa:d*** **instead of** ولد ***walad*** **(boy),** بت ***bitt*** **instead of** بنت ***bint*** **(girl).**

The formal relative pronoun التي (which f.) instead of the colloquial اللي *illi* along with other formal terms occur in the speech of Nabila who is angry with her husband Isam (p 195):

(60) أنا كنت باحب راجل .. انسان بتربطني بيه العلاقة التي تربط الإنسان بالإنسان

(I used to love a man... a human being that is related to me as one human being to another.)

Another feature of the colloquial is the assimilation that combines a whole sentence in one phonological word, e.g. أندهولك *andahu:lak* (Shall I call him for you ?) ; قلتيله ' *ulti:lu* (You f. told him.) ; أسألهولك *'as'alh:lik* (Shall I ask him for you ?) At one point, the child-like speech problems of the maid are shown when Zen زين the maid (p174) substitutes the sound of "l" for that of "r" in the name "Firyal" and of "s" for "sh" in "mafi:sh"(not/none) . But some features seem to be foreign. For example, in flirting with Nagaf, Zaki refers to her more than once (p126) as يا فرختي "my chick". Women's language, as distinct from men's, is full of "emotional" expressions. Consider, for example, Nagaf's response to Isam (p151) :

(61) يا قلبي عليك .. (My heart goes to you ...)

يادي المصيبة .. يادي العيب .. ما تعليش حسك كده .. (What a disaster !... What shame !... Don't speak so loudly ...)Another example is Hamida reproaching Isam her son for being harsh toward his sister Sawsan: (62)

ليه ..؟ دي غلبانه والله يابني ربنا يغلبه جوزها زي ما غلبها .. كده يا عصام تكسر نفس اختك في يوم زي ده .. دي كانت فاكره إنك حتصالحها .

(Why.. ? She is helpless my son by God. May God make her husband suffer just as he made her suffer... She thought you were going to make up with her...)

The characteristics of modern Egyptian Arabic discussed so far and illustrated from the recent writings of journalists, novelists and dramatists are not comprehensive. But they reflect the general trend that clearly reveals the impact of sociological, political and economic changes as well as the influence of Western languages and cultures on modern Egyptian Arabic. Both vocabulary and structure have changed. There is a growing acceptance of colloquial Arabic especially in the dialogues in plays and of foreign terms in modern texts. Although the attempt to change the Arabic alphabet has failed, the writing system has also been influenced as shown, for instance, in the use of abbreviations and in representing some foreign sounds. Further analysis may help throw light on modern usage.

Humor in Egyptian Literature

Another aspect of Egyptian Arabic is a distinctive sense of humor. Humor may be described as partly universal and partly cultural. It is a source of pleasure that often manifests itself in laughter. Its functions range from sheer entertainment to criticism to providing a social safety valve. There are a large number of publications that deal with general and specific cultures such as British and American humor from different perspectives. Language and context no doubt play a major role in understanding jokes whether written, spoken or drawn in cartoons and pictures with sexual, political or ethnic connotations.

In some cases, because of the language and the cultural content, appreciating a joke may require native linguistic competence and possibly intelligence. Humor is of different kinds: good and bad humor, sick and healthy humor, school and college humor, sports humor. etc. In this section, an attempt is made to characterize humor that is distinctively Egyptian.

The Arabic terms most commonly associated with humor are نكتة *nukta* (a joke), نوادر / مُلَح *nawa:dir/ mulah* (witty anecdotes) , فكاهة *fuka:ha* 'humor', فزورة ج فوازير *fazzu:ra pl. fawa:zi:r* (puzzle) and تسالي *tasa:li* 'diversions'. قفشه ج قفشات *'afsha 'afsha:t pl.* (a surprising joke).

Ali Mroureh, a Lebanese writer, refers to Egyptian humor as distinctive and worthy of further study (Mroueh 1987: 12). He traces modern Egyptian humorous publications to 1919 when الكشكول *al-kashku:l* first appeared followed by other magazines such as الصرخة *assarxa* , البعكوكة *al-ba`ku:ka*, الإثنين والفكاهة *al'ithne:n wal-fuka:ha.* Examples of humor involving well-known literary figures are provided. Here is a joke in a dialogue between Hafiz Ibrahim and abdil-Aziz al-Bishri: (p147)

al-Bishri: When I saw you at a distance I thought you were a woman.

Ibrahim: It seems we both have weak sight; when I saw you coming , I too thought you were a man.

An example of political jokes is the following: (p 153)
The conversation was about the importance of telling the truth no matter how hurt one may feel. One of those present, a politician, said that in this regard he recalled that once his father hit him because he told the truth. al-Bishri then said, "Since that time you have never again told the truth!!"

It is interesting to note the use of English in some jokes. (p163, 156) Some people advised a Sheikh to learn English. He went to a school and returned after six days and said, "I've already learnt English." His friend asked, " How could you learn the language in just six days?" The Sheikh replied," This is a matter of intelligence." His friend, to test him, asked," How do you say in English تعال إلي هنا [Come here!] ? He said "Come here!" His friend then asked "How do you say اخرج [Get out !] ?" His answer was " I go out and then say: Come here !"

(Here is another joke p154):
The voters in the early formation of political parties were divided between the two leaders Saad Zaghlul and Adli Yakan. One day a friend jokingly asked Mohamad al-Babli, "Are you Saadist or Adlist?" al-Babli answered using an Arabic word rhyming with -ist replied, " أنا فلْست (I'm lost)."

<u>Comics</u>
There are also Arabic caricatures and comic strips which though influenced by Western models express Egyptian humor. Caricatures are largely political. Examples of such caricatures are presented in Gom`a Farahat's 1990 book عالم ساخن جدا ! *A Very Hot World !* (Cairo: Daar El-Maarif). Topics include national as well as international issues such as the Palestinean Intifada الإنتفاضة الفلسطينية and the IMF صندوق النقد الدولي with the script in both Arabic and English.

Similarly, comic strips are a mixture of Western and Egyptian cultures as can be clearly shown in two publications, namely *Samir* سمير and *Mickey* ميكي. A. Douglas and F.Malti-Douglas provide interesting examples of the "Egyptianization of Mickey Mouse" and the use of Pharaonic characters to express cultural views and events, e.g. "Mickey Mouse celebrates Ramadan" (See *Arab Comic Strips.* Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994.) It is worth noting, as the authors point out (p 4), that the written Cairo dialect is the only dialect that can be understood throughout the Arab world.

One figure often associated with funny anecdotes is Guha جحا .Guha is a legendary figure whose real name, according to one source is Nasr- iddin Arru:mi نصرالدين الرومي and is traced to Turkish, Persian or Arab origin. That source indicates that he was born in Turkey and lived from about 1208 to 1284. But in Egyptian folklore Guha is presented as the typical native Egyptian *'almaṣri 'afandi* المصري أفندي or *'ibn ilbalad* ابن البلد that often tells the shocking truth and acts like a philosopher, a preacher, a cynic or simply an entertainer. Here are some Guha anecdotes.

Humor Categories

Egyptian humor falls into several categories. One category is that in which the procedure suddenly reveals hidden meanings (cf. C.Davies 1990: 7) Here is an example:
Teacher: What is left when you subtract five from five?
Pupil: I don't know.
Teacher: Suppose you had 5 piasters in your pocket and then you lost the five piasters. What would you have in your pocket?
Pupil: A hole.

Another category is the puzzle. The following puzzles are taken from *The Ramadan Puzzles* فوازير رمضان by Biram al-Tunisi بيرم التونسي the popular Egyptian writer of colloquial

poetry. Ramadan is the Muslim month of fasting when people indulge in entertainment at night. The puzzles are expressed in rhyming verse in Cairene Arabic.

(1) في الدنيا مهمومة قوللي علي طيرة
Tell me about a bird Full of care in the world
وهي مظلومة يقولوا مشئومة
They say it is omenous But it is unfairly treated

The puzzle refers to the owl which is associated in Egyptian culture with pessimisim and ill luck.

(2) له اسم مهول شئ زي الغول
Something like a monster Has an awesome name

ومالوش منخار وودانه كبار
His ears are large And has no nose
لكن مكار عايش مدفون
He lives buried But he is cunning

كل الأسرار يحفظ ويصون
He keeps and guards All secrets

This puzzle refers to the Sphinx which in Arabic أبو الهول means (Lit. the father of terror).

(3) ولا يمل العمل صبور علي طول العطش
Patient about thirst for long Is never bored with work
ينضرب بيه المثل وفي الشهامة والمروءة
In honor and courage He is proverbial

This puzzle refers to the camel which is known for its endurance.

(4) ورق ر قيق من الدقيق Thin puffs of flour
ياكلوه تحالي وتغيير ربق Eaten as dessert and for a change

References (Humor)

Abdellatif, Fahmy. 1976. جحا قال لي *Goha Has Told Me.* Cairo and Alexandria: Modern Egyptian Bureau.

Adams, A.K. 1969. *The Home Book of Humorous Quotations.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

Davies, Christie. 1990. *Ethnic Humor Around the World.* A Comparative Analysis. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Douglas, Allen and Fadwa Malti-Douglas. 1994. *Arab Comic Strips.* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Durant, John and Jonathan Miller (Eds.) 1988. *Laughing Matters: A Serious Look at Humour.* New York: Longman Scientific and Technical. (Lectures dated 24-28 August 1987).

Eastman, Max. 1936. *Enjoyment of Laughter.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Mrouah, Ali. 1987. موسوعة الأدب الضاحك *An Anthology of Humour in Arab Literature.* 8vols. London: Riad El-Rayyis Books.
(Volume 2 deals with Egyptian jokes.)

Palmer, Jerry. 1987. *The Logic of the Absurd.* On film and television comedy. London: BFI British Film Institute.

Raskin, Victor. 1985. *Semantic Mechanisms of Humor.* Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company.

Shalaby, Assayyid. 1972. ضحكات وتسالي *Laughs and Entertainment.* Cairo: Madbouly Bookstore.

Sherrin, Ned (Ed.) 1995. *The Oxford Dictionary of Humorous Quotations.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Egyptian Arabic Proverbs

Introduction

Understanding Egyptian Arabic can be greatly enhaned by the study of popular proverbs which have been orally handed down from one generation to another. Proverbs reveal the various aspects of a specific culture over the centuries. Thus, Egyptian proverbs combine ancient Egyptian, Coptic, Islamic and foreign elements. At the same time, they express in some parts universal notions that can be found in other cultures. To illustrate this idea, the following study focuses on comparing selected proverbs found in spoken Egyptian Arabic and American English. Some Arabic proverbs are adopted from the Koran القُرْآن or the Bible. While some Arabic proverbs are formal or literary, the majority are informal and their pronunciation is colloquial. In some cases, the same idea may be expressed with reference to the local environment in different cultures. Consider, for example, the similar Egyptian and English proverbs (i,ii):

(i) القِرْش الأبْيَض يِنْفَع في اليوم الأسْوِد

[Literally: A white piastre is useful on a black day.]

(ii) Save your pennies for a rainy day.

The interesting thing is that in spite of the different cultural traditions, there is a striking similarity or universality in many proverbs. This is especially true when the proverb expresses a moral or general social code of behavior. Compare the following Arabic (iii) and English (iv) examples:

(iii) وعْدِ الحُرّ دِين

[Lit. A free man's promise is a debt.]

(iv) A promise is a debt.

Translation plays an important role in promoting proverbs across cultures. Sometimes the translation is exact and sometimes it is approximate. Here are examples:

(v) الوصُول إلَي قَلْب الرَّجُل عَن طَريق معْدته

[Lit. Reaching a man's heart is through his stomach.]

(vi) The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

(vii) بِعيد عَن العِين بعيد عَن القَلْب [Lit. Away from the eye is away from the heart.]

(viii) Out of sight out of mind.

(ix) عِنْد الشدّة والضيق يبان العَدو مِن الصَّدِيق

(Lit. At [the time of] trouble and difficulty an enemy is distinguished from a friend.)

(x) A friend in need is a friend indeed.

Proverbs are often concise, memorable, and usually metaphorical statements that reflect traditional wisdom (See Metaphors below). Thus according to *American Proverbs* (1992: xii), proverbs are "concise statements of apparent truths that have common currency".They are close to idioms. Rhyming sounds, wit and skilful play on words help make a proverb memorable. In some cases, the proverb is both memorable and instructive. Here are two such proverbs: one (xi) from Arabic and another (xii) from English.

(xi) حَبِيب مَالُه مَا لُه وعَدوّ مالُه مَالُه

(Lit. He who loves his money has no friend and he who is the enemy of his money has no enemy.)

(xii) Loving and giving makes life worth living.

In some cases, because many proverbs have a rather long history, they often reflect changing human attitudes and sometimes bias that may be no longer acceptable today. Examples can be found in "negative" proverbs related to women and some ethnic groups. In a sense, such proverbs reveal the dark side of culture as illustrated by the following examples from Arabic and English:

(xiii) مَن أعْطَي سِرّه لمراتُه يا طول عَذابُه وشتاتُه

(Lit. He that tells his wife his secret will suffer and remain distracted for long.)

(xiv) If it is a secret, don't tell it to a woman.

There are also examples of contradictory sayings. Contrast, for instance, the early proverbs (i), (ii) and the following examples (xv),(xvi):

(xv) اصْرِف مَا في الجِّيب يَأْتِيك ما في الغِيب

(Lit. Spend what is in [your] pocket and you will get what is in the unknown future.)

(xvi) Spend and God will send.

Knowledge of proverbs and their variations is an essential part of native language competence. Some proverbs are more common than others. They touch on every aspect of daily communication such as weather, work, marriage, friends, health, family, relations,

neighbors, foreigners, money and love. In both speaking and comprehension, they play an important role in persuasion, entertainment and social interaction.

Similar Proverbs in Arabic and English

Arabic and English proverbs are presented below in consecutive order. (The organization according to topics isgiven at the end.) The Arabic proverb is given first in Arabic script, followed by its transliteration. Then the literal or approximate English meaning is provided within (parentheses). If the translation is very close to the English proverb, only the latter is given. Sound symbols are approximate. Arabic rhythm is even and stress is usually on the penultimate syllable or final long vowel.

Symbols: ` represents Ar.ع sound ; '...Ar. ء ; gh ... غ; h .... ح;

d ..... ض ; x ...خ ; sh...ش ; (s-h are separate sounds.); q .... ق ;

d /(z informally) .. ظ ; s..... ص ; t..... ط ; th...ث (t-h are separate sounds.) Underlined symbols indicate velarization or pharyngealization and colon (:)after a vowel indicates length. Gemination is shown by doubling the symbol.) Notice that ق is pronounced sometimes as ' [Ar. ء] and sometimes as *q*.

(1) مَفِيش دُخَّان مِن غِير نَار mafi:sh duxxa:n min ghe:r na:r (There is no smoke without fire.)

(2) There is no fire without some smoke.

(3) يِعْمِل مِن الحَبَّة قُبَّة yi`mil milhabba 'ubba (He makes a dome out of a seed.)

(4) Don't make a mountain of a molehill.

(5) البَقَرة لَمَّا تُقَع تِكْتَر سَكَاكِينْها 'ilba'ara lamma tu'a` tiktar sakakinha (When a cow falls, there will be many knives for it.)

(6) If a man once falls, all will tread on him.

(7) الوصُول إلَي قَلْب الرَّجُل عَن طَرِيق مِعْدتُه

'alwusu:l 'ila qalb irragul `an tari:q mi`ditu (Reaching a man's heart is through his stomach.)

(8) The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

(9) عَصْفور في الإيد ولا عَشرَة علَي الشَّجرَة `asfu:r fil 'i:d wala `ashra `assagara (A bird in the hand is better than ten in the bush.)

(10) A bird in the hand is better than two in the bush.

(11) إتْمَسْكِنوا لحَدِّ ما اتمَكِّنوا 'itmaskinu lihaddi ma 'itmakkinu: (They stooped until they had the power.)

(12) Stoop to conquer.

(13) إن كان حَبيبَك عَسل ما تلْحَسوش كُلُّه 'in ka:n habi:bak `asal ma tilhasu:sh kullu (If your beloved is honey, don't lick him up altogether.)

(14) If your friend is honey, do not lick him up altogether.

(15) يا بَخْت من زَار وخَفِّف ya: baxti min za:r wi xaffif (He is lucky/ blessed who visits and does not overextend his stay.)

(16) A short visit is best.

(17) افْتَكرْنا القُطّ جَاه ينُطّ 'iftakarna l'utt gah yinutt (As we thought of the cat, it came up jumping.)

(18) Speak of the devil and he always appears.

(19) الحلْو / الزِّين ما يكْمَلْش 'ilhlw / 'izze:n ma yikmalsh (No sweet / nice person is perfect.)

(20) None of us are perfect.

(21) الجَّعَان يحْلَم بسُوق العِيش 'igga`a:n yihlam bisu:' il`e:sh (A hungry person dreams of the bread market.)

(22) The hungry man often talks of bread.

(23) طولة البَال تهدّ الجِّبال tu:lt il ba:l tihidd iggiba:l (Patience wears out mountains.) [Cf. #652]

(24) Patience wears out stones / pierces the rock.

(25) إيد لوَحْدَها ما تسَقَّفْش 'i:d liwahdaha ma tsa''afsh (A single hand by itself does not clap.)

(26) Two hands are better than one.

(27) الإيد البَطَّالَة نجْسَة 'il'i:d ilbatta:la niksa (An idle hand is unholy.)

(28) Idle hands are the devil's tools.

(29) بعِيد عَنِ العِين بعيد عَن القَلْب bi`i:d `an il`e:n bi`i:d `an il'alb (Away from the eye is away from the heart.)
(30) Out of sight out of mind./Absence is love's foe./ Far from the eyes, far from the heart.

(31) بَصلة المُحبّ خَرُوف basalit ilmuhibbi xaru:f (The loving person's onion is a lamb.)
(32) A cheerful look makes a dish a feast.

(33) جُحْر الدِّيب يِساع مِيت حَبِيب guhr iddi:b yisa: ` mi:t habi:b (A wolf's hole accommodates a hundred friends.)
(34) Where there is room in the heart, there is room in the house.

(35) جَعْجَعَة ولا أرَي طحْنا ga`ga`a wa la 'ara tihnan (A lot of noise but I don't see any results [Lit. flour].)
(36) Much ado about nothing.

(37) شِدّة الأُلْفَة تُسْقِط الكُلْفَة shiddat il'ulfa tusqit ikkulfa (Much familiarity does away with formality.)
(38) Familiarity breeds contempt.

(39) الضَّرورَات تُبِيح المَحْظُورات 'iddaru:ra:t tubi:h ilmahzu:ra:t (Necessities permit the forbidden.) Cf. # 305
(40) Necessity knows no law.

(41) إللِّي مِن نَصِيبَك يِصِيبَك 'illi min nasi:bak yisi:bak (What is your lot will hit you.)
(42) You cannot escape your fate.

(43) الدُّنْيا ماهِش دَايْمه 'iddunya ma:hish dayma (The world is not permanent.)
(44) In this world nothing is permanent except change.

(45) يُوم لَك ويُوم عَليك yo:m lak wi yo:m `ale:k (One day is for you and one day is against you.) [Cf. #275]
(46) We all have our ups and downs.

(47) تَحْت السَّواهِي دَواهِي taht issawa:hi dawa:hi (Beneath the [apparently] quiet people there are troubles.)
(48) Still water runs deep.

(49) الكَّلْب ما يِشَّطّر إلا عَلي باب دارُه 'ikkalbi ma yishshattar 'illa `ala ba:b da:ru (A dog does not show off except at its house door .)

(50) Every dog is valiant at his own door.

(51) إذا كان لَك عَنْد الكَلْب حَاجَه قُل لُه يا سِيدِي 'iza ka:n lak `and ikkalbi ḥa:ga 'ullu ya: si:di: (If you need something from the dog, address him "My master!".)

(52) A dog with money is addressed, "Mr Dog".

(53) القِرْد في عِين امُّه غَزال 'il'irdi fi `e:n ummu ghaza:l (A monkey is a beauty to its mother. [Lit. A monkey is a gazelle in its mother's eye].)

(54) Every mother's duck is a swan.

(55) كَلِّم القُطّ يِخَرْبشك kallim il'uṭṭ yixarbishak (Talk to the cat and it will scratch you.)

(56) The cat is a good friend, but she scratches.

(57) اللِّي يِسْرَق البِيضَه يِسْرَق الجَمل 'illi yisra' ilbe:ḍa yisra' iggamal (He that steals an egg will steal a camel.)

(58) He that will steal an egg, will steal a chicken.

(59) اعْمَل لدُنْياك كأنّك تَعيش أبَدا ، واعْمَل لآخرَتك كأنَّك تَموتُ غَداً 'i`mal lidunya:ka ka'annaka ta`i:shu 'abadan wa`mal li'a:xiratika ka'annaka tamu:tu ghadan (Work for your world as if you were going to live for ever, and work for your after life as if you were going to die tomorrow.)

(60) Say your prayers as if you were going to die tomorrow, do your work as if you were going to live for ever.

(61) اتْعلِّموا الزِّيانَه / الحِلاقَه في رُوس اليتَامَي 'it`allimu izziya:na / ilḥila:'a fi: ru:s ilyata:ma (They learnt grooming/ haircutting by shaving the orphans' heads.)

(62) A barber learns to shave by shaving fools.

(63) اللّي تِعْرفُه أحْسن مِن اللِّي ما تِعْرفُوش 'illi ti`rafu 'aḥsan milli ma ti`rafu:sh (He that you know is better than the one you don't know.)

(64) The devil I know is better than the devil I don't know.

(65) شَحّات يِكْره شَحّات وصَاحِب البِيت يِكْرَه الإثْنِين shaḥḥa:t yikrah shaḥḥa:t wi ṣa:ḥib ilbe:t yikrah ilitne:n (One beggar hates another and the homeowner hates both of them.)

(66) Beggar is jealous of beggar.

(67) اللِّي بيحْفُر بِير لِغيرُه يُقَع فِيه 'illi biyuhfur bi:r lighe:ru yu'a` fi:h (He that digs a ditch for another will fall into it.)
(68) If you dig a pit for someone else, you fall into it yourself./ He who lays a snare for another, himself falls into it.

(68) إنَّ الطّيورَ عَلي أشْكالِها تَقَع 'inna ttu:ra `ala 'ashka:liha taqa` (Birds go with their types.)
(69) Birds of a feather flock together.

(70) اللِّي يِعيش يَاما يشُوف واللِّي يِمْشِي يشوف أكْثَر 'illi yi`i:sh ya:ma yishu:f willi yimshi: yishu:f aktar (He that lives sees a lot and he that travels [Lit. walks] sees more.)
(71) He that travels knows much.

(72) أهْلِ السَّمَاح مِلاح 'ahl issama:h mila:h (Those who forgive are good.)
(73) To err is human, to forgive divine.

(74) بَاب النَجّار مخلّع ba:b innagga:r mixalla` (The carpenter's door is unfixed.)
(75) The painter never paints his house.

(76) زيّ القُطَط بِسَبع تِرْواح zayy il'utat bisaba` tirwa:h (Like cats, he has seven lives.)
(77) A cat has nine lives.

(78) تاكْلوه يِرُوح تِفرَّقُوه يِفُوح taklu:h yiru:h tifarra'u:h yifu:h (When you eat it, it's gone but when you share it, its aroma spreads.)
(79) A joy that is shared is a joy made double.

(80) صَباح الخِير يا جَارِي قَال : انْتَ في دَارَك وانَا في دَارِي saba:h ilxe:r ya: ga:ry 'a:l inta fi da:rak wana fi da:ri:
(Good morning my neighbor. He said,"You are in your home and I am in mine.)
(81) Good fences make good neighbors.

(82) مَنْ عَلَّمَك حَرْفاً صِرْتَ لَهُ عَبْداً man `allamaka harfan sirta lahu `abdan (You become a slave to him who teaches you a letter.)
(83) Who teaches me for a day is my father for a lifetime.

(84) اللّي ما تْرَبّيه الأهالي تِربِّيه الأيّام واللّيالي 'illi ma trabbi:h il'aha:li trabbi:h il'ayya:m willaya:li (He that is not brought up by his parents, will be brought up by time [Lit.days and nights] .)

(85) Time is the best teacher.

(86) عنْد البطُون تتُوه العُقول `inda lbitu:n titu:h il`i'u:l (At eating [Lit.stomachs] time thinking is lost.)

(87) A hungry stomach has no ears.

(88) كُلْ ما يعْجبَك والْبس ما يعْجب النّاس kul ma: yi`gibak wilbis ma: yi`gib inna:s (Eat what you like and wear what people like.)

(89) Eat to please yourself, but dress to please others.

(90) عند الشدّة والضّيق يبان العَدو مِن الصّديق `inda shidda waddi:' yiba:n il`adu missadi:' (In [time of] trouble and distress an enemy is distinguished from a friend.)

(91) A friend in need is a friend indeed.

(92) ما يمْسَح دمْعتَك إلاّ إيدَك ma yimsah dim`itak 'illa 'i:dak (Only your hand can wipe your tear.)

(93) Never rub your eye but with your elbow.

(94) لَبِّس البُوصَة تبْقَي عَرُوسَة labbis ilbu:sa tib'a `aru:sa (Dress the reed and it will become a bride.)

(95) Fine feathers make fine birds. / Clothes make the man.

(96) مُعْظَم النّار مِن مُسْتَصْغر الشّرَر mu`zam inna:r min mustazghar ishsharar (Most of the fire comes from tiny sparks.)

(97) A little spark kindles a great fire.

(98) لا بُدّ للشّهْد مِن إبَر النّحْل la budda lishshahdi min 'ibar innahl (In order to have honey, there must be the stings of bees.)

(99) If you want to gather honey, you must fear the stings of bees./No bees no honey, no work no money.

(100) النّاس لبَعْضَها

'inna:s liba`daha (People are for each other / to help each other.)

(101) No man is an island.

(102) الدُّنْيا ما اتْخَلقتْش في يُوم 'iddunya ma txala'itshi fi yo:m (The world was not created in a day.)

(103) Rome was not built in a day.

(104) حُبِّ الوَطَن مِن الإيمَان ḥubb ilwaṭan mil'i:ma:n
(Patriotism /Love of one's country is a matter of faith.)
(105) In the country one does not lose faith.
(106) اتْغَدَّي واتْمَدَّي -ولَوْ دِقيقْتِين واتْعَشَّي واتْمَشَّي - ولو خَطْوتِين 'itghadda witmadda - wa law di'i'te:n - wit`ashsha witmashsha - wa law xaṭwite:n (Eat lunch and rest -even for two minutes; eat dinner and take a walk -if only a couple of steps.)
(107) After dinner rest a while; after supper walk a mile.
(108) اكْسَر للعَيِّل ضِلْع يِطْلَع لُه اثنين 'iksar lil`ayyil ḍil` yiṭla` lu tne:n (Break a child's rib and two ribs will grow.)
(109) Spare the rod and spoil the child.
(110) بِنْت الوِزَّه عَوَّامَه bint ilwizza `awwa:ma (A gosling [Lit. the goose's daughter] is a [born] swimmer.)
(111) Like mother, like daughter.
(112) ما تِيجي المَصايِب إلاّ مِن الحَبايِب ma ti:gi ilmaṣa:yib 'illa milḥaba:yib (It is only relatives that make trouble.)
(113) A lot of relatives, a lot of trouble.
(114) عُمْر الدَّم ما يِبْقي مَيَّه `umr iddam ma yib'a mayya
(Blood never becomes water.)
(115) Blood is thicker than water.
(116) الجَواز قِسْمَه ونَصِيب 'iggawa:z 'isma wnaṣi:b (Marriage is a matter of destiny and lottery.)
(117) Marriage is a lottery.
(118) إنْ لَقيت بَلَد تعْبد عِجْل حِشّ واطْعمُه 'in la'e:t balad ti`bid `igl ḥishshi wiṭ`imu (If you find a town worshipping a bull, cut grass and feed it.)
(119) When in Rome do as the Romans.
(120) إيد نِحبّها وخَاطْري قَطْعَها 'i:d niḥibbaha wi xaṭri: 'aṭ`aha
(A hand we kiss but my wish is to cut it off.)
(121) Many kiss the hand they wish to see cut off.
(122) سكتْنالُه دَخَل بِحْمارُه sikitna:lu daxal biḥma:ru (When we didn't stop him, he entered together with his donkey.)
(123) Give him an inch and he'll take a yard.

(124) المْسْتَقْبَل بِيَد اللّه 'ilmusta'bal biyadi lla:h
(The future is in God's hands.)
(125) The future is a sealed book.
(126) في وشُّه ولا تغشُّه fi wishshu wala tghishshu (Say it to his face and don't deceive him.)
(127) Call a spade a spade.
(128) كَبير القَوْم خَادِمهُم kabi:r ilqawmi xa:dimuhum (The greatest person in a group is the one that serves them.)
(129) He who will be great among you, let him serve.
(130) الكِّدْب مَالوش رِجْلِين 'ikkidbi malu:sh rigle:n (Lying has no legs.)
(131) A lie has no legs [but a scandal has wings].
(132) التِّكْرار يِعلِّم الحُمَار 'ittikra:r yi`allim ilhuma:r (Repetition will make a stupid person [Lit. a donkey] learn.)
(133) Repetition is the mother of learning/ skill. (See next one.)
(134) في الإعَادَة إفادَه fil'i`a:da 'ifa:da (In repetition there is learning.)
(135) Practice makes perfect.
(136) الحَسَنه ما تجوزْش إلاّ بَعْد كَفْو البِيت 'ilhasana matguzsh illa ba`di kafw ilbe:t (Charity may be allowed only after home has had enough.)
(137) Charity begins at home.
(138) دُخَّان القَرايِب يِعْمي duxxa:n il'ara:yib yi`mi (The relatives' smoke is blinding.) [Cf. # 112, 317]
(139) Relatives are best with a wall between.
(140) الغَرْقان يتْعلَّق بِقشَّه 'il ghar'a:n yit`alla' bi'ashsha
(141) A drowning man will catch at a straw.
(142) اكْفِي القِدْرَه علَي فُمَّها تِطْلَع البِنْت لامّهَا 'ikfi il'idra `ala fummaha tiṭla` ilbinti lummaha (Turn the pot upside down; the daughter takes after her mother.)
(143) As is the mother, so is the daughter. / Observe the mother and take the daughter.
(144) اللِّي ما يِيجي لأهْلُه ابْن حَرام 'illi ma yi:gi li'ahlu 'ibni

hara:m (He that isn't like his family is illegitimate.)
(145) The like breeds the like.
(146) كُلّ نَفْس وما اشْتَهت kulli nafs wi mashtahat (Everybody has his desire.)
(147) Everyone to his own taste.
(148) كُتْر الكَّلام يِقلّ القِيمَه kutr ikkala:m yi'ill il'i:ma (Talking much reduces respect.)
(149) He who talks much errs much /says many foolish things.
(150) خَيْر الأمُور الوَسَط xayr il'umu:r ilwasat (Moderation [Lit.the middle] is the best of all matters.)
(151) Moderation is the best means. / Everything in moderation.
(152) حَرامِي بِلا بَيِّنه شرِيف/ سُلْطان hara:mi bila bayyina shari:f / sulta:n (A thief without evidence is innocent / a king.)
(153) Innocent until proven guilty.
(154) السُكوت عَلامَة الرِّضَا 'issuku:t `ala:mat irrida (Silence betokens consent.)
(155) Silence gives consent.
(156) السِرّ في السُكّان لا في المكَان 'issirri fissukka:n la filmaka:n (The secret is in the inhabitants not the place.)
(157) The world is what people make it.
(158) يا مِسْتَعْجِل عَطَّلك الَّله ya: mista`gil `attalak alla (You who are in a hurry God may delay you.)
(159) More haste, less speed.
(160) اللِّي لُه عِينين وراس يِعْمِل ما تعْمِله النَّاس 'illi luh `ine:n wi ra:s yi`mil ma ta`milu nna:s (He that has eyes and a head will do what people do.)
(161) He can who thinks he can.
(162) اللِّي يِعَاشِر المَتْهوم يِنْتِهم 'illi yi`a:shir ilmat-hu:m yintihim (He that lives [as a compnion of a suspect will become a suspect.)
(163) Bad companions corrupt good morals.
(164) إللِّي يسْأل ما يتُوهْش 'illi yis'al ma ytuhsh (He that asks will not be lost.)
(165) Better ask twice than lose your way once.

(166) إنْ كانَ الكَلام مِن فَضَّه يكون السُكوت مِن دَهب 'in ka:n ikkala:m min fadda yiku:n issuku:t min dahab (If talking is [made of] silver silence is made of] gold.)

(167) Silence is golden.

(168) خَيْرُ الكَلام ما قَلّ ودَلّ xayru kkala:m ma: qalla wa dall (The best of speech is what is concise and meaningful.)

(169) Few words are best. / Brevity is the soul of wit.

(170) إللّي يصْبُر يِنُول 'illi yizbur yinu:l (He that is patient will achieve his goal.) [Cf. #652]

(171) Wait and you will be rewarded.

(172) دَبَّر غَداك تِلْقي عَشَاك dabbar ghada:k til'a `asha:k (Save your lunch and you will find your dinner.)

(172) Save today, safe tomorrow.

(173) السَّلَف تَلَف والرَدّ خسارَة 'issalaf talaf wirraddi xisa:ra (Borrowing is bad and returning [the loan] is a loss.)

(174) Borrow and borrow adds up to sorrow.

(175) الدِّين هَمّ بِاللّيل ومَذلّة بِالنَّهَار 'idde:n hammi bille:l wi mazalla binnaha:r (Debt is worry by night and humiliation by day.)

(176) Beware of borrowing: it brings care by night and disgrace by day.

(177) إيش خَاطِر الأعْمَي، قال قُفَّة عِيون 'e:sh xa:tir il'a`ma 'a:l 'uffit `iyu:n (What does a blind person wish? He said: a basket of eyes.)

(178) If wishes were horses, beggars might ride.

(179) إدِّيني رغِيف ويكُون نضِيف 'iddi:ni righi:f wi yku:n nidi:f (Give me a loaf of bread and it should be clean.)

(180) Beggars can't be choosers.

(181) المُوت عَلي رِقاب النَّاس 'ilmo:t `ala ri'a:b inna:s (Death awaits people.)

(182) Death waits for no man./ Death is but death and all in time shall die.

(183) خَلِّيه عَلَي هَوَاه لَمّا يِيجِي دِيلُه في قَفَاه xalli:h `ala hawa:h lamma yl:gi de:lu fi 'afa:h (Let him have his way until he is

caught [Lit. until his tail gets into the back of his neck].)
(184) Give him enough rope and he will hang himself.
(185) جه يكحّلها عماها gih yikahhalha `ama:ha (As he was beautifying [putting mascara in] her eyes, he made her blind.)
(186) Sometimes the remedy is worse than the disease.
(187) يا بخت من قدر وعفي ya baxti min 'idir wi `ifi
(Blessed is he that has the power and forgives.)
(188) To err is human; to forgive is divine.
(189) بركه يا جامع اللي جات منك ما جتش مني baraka ya ga:mi` 'illi gat minnak ma gatshi minni (It's a blessing O mosque, that it was your fault not mine.)
(190) A lazy man always finds excuses.
(191) أكبر منك بيوم يعرف عنك بسنه 'akbar minnak biyo:m yi`raf `annak bi sana (He that is older than you by one day knows more than you by a year.)
(192) There is no head like an old head.
(193) بدال ما اقول للعبد يا سيدي أقضي حاجتي بإيدي bida:l ma 'u:l lil`abd ya si:di 'a'di hagti bi 'i:di
(Instead of addressing a slave as a master, I'd rather help myself with my own hands.)
(194) Self-help is the best help.
(195) حرّص من صاحبك ولاتخوّنه harras min sahbak wala txawwinu (Better be cautious with your friend rather than distrust him.)
(196) Lock your door and keep your neighbors honest.
(197) النّاس مقامات 'inna:s ma'a:ma:t (People vary in status.)
(198) Not all men are equal.
(199) ولا خلقه ع الكوم إلاّ لمّا شافت يوم wala xil'a `akko:m 'illa lamma sha:fit yo:m (Even a rag on a heap had its day.)
(200) Every dog has his day.
(201) بفلوسك بنت السّلطان عروسك bi flu:sak bint issulta:n `aru:sak (With your money the king's daughter is your bride.)
(201) Money is power./ Money will do anything.

(202) سلامة الإنسان في حَلاوِة اللِّسان sala:mit il'insa:n fi hala:wit illisa:n (A person's safety lies in the sweetness of his tongue.) [Cf. next Ar. proverb.]

(203) Who keeps his tongue keeps his soul.

(204) لِسانَك حُصانَك إنْ صُنْتُه صَانَك وإنْ هِنْتُه هَانَك lisa:nak husa:nak 'in suntu sa:nak w in hintu ha:nak (Your tongue is [like] your horse: if you preserve it, it will preserve you and if you insult it, it will insult you.)

(205) Confine your tongue lest it confine you.

(206) إللِّي بِيتُه مِن قِزاز ما يِرْمِيش النَّاس بالحِجارة 'illi be:tu min 'iza:z ma yirmi:sh inna:s bilhiga:ra (He whose house is made of glass does not throw stones at people.)

(207) People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.)

(208) إللّي عَلي الجِّبِين لازِم تشُوفُه العِين 'illi `aggibi:n la:zim tishu:fu l`e:n (What is on the forehead must come to pass. [Lit.the eye must see].)

(209) What must happen will happen regardless.

(210) الأخْد حِلْو والعَطا مُرّ il'axdi hilw wil`ata murr (To receive is sweet and to give is bitter.)

(211) It is more blessed to give than to receive.

(212) God loves a cheerful giver.

(213) إطْبُخي يا جارْيَة كَلّف يَا سِيدي 'itbuxi ya garya kallif ya si:di (Maid...Cook! Master... Pay/ If the maid is to cook, the master must pay.)

(214) If you want to dance, you must pay the fiddler.

(215) الضَّرْب في المَيِّت حَرام 'iddarbi filmayyit hara:m (Beating a dead person is futile [Lit. a sin.)

(216) It is of little use to whip a dead horse. / Nothing is baser than stepping on a man who is down.

(217) اللّي لُه أوِّل له آخِر 'illi luh 'awwil luh 'a:xir (What has a beginning has an end.)

(218) All things come to an end.

(219) إللّي مالَك فِيه ماتنْحَشرْشِي فِيه 'illi ma:lak fi:h ma tinhasharshi fi:h (Don't meddle with what is none of your business.)

(220) Mind no business but your own.

(221) إللّي ما يِسْمَع ياكُل لمّا يِشْبع 'illi ma yisma` ya:kul lamma yishba` (He that doesn't listen [to advice] will suffer a lot.)
(222) If you can't take advice, you can't be helped.
(223) من حَبّ نَفْسُه كَرهتُه جَماعتُه man habbi nafsu karahitu gama`tu (He that loves himself is hated by his community.)
(224) He that falls in love with himself will have no rivals.
(225) اللّي يخاف مِن العَفْريت يِطْلَع لُه 'illi yixa:f mil`afri:t yiṭla` lu (He that is afraid of the devil, will have the devil appear to him.)
(226) Think of the devil and he appears.
(227) اللّي يِدْفَع القِرْش يزَمَّر ابْنُه 'illi yidfa` il'irshi yizammar ibnu (He that pays the piastre will have his son play the tune.)

(228) He who pays the piper may call the tune.
(229) اللّي يدُقّ يِتْعَب 'illi yidu''i yit`ab (He that insists [on everything] will have trouble./ One must be flexible.)
(230) You can't please everybody.
(231) سَلِّم القُطّ مُفْتاح الكَرار sallim il'uṭṭi mufta:ḥ ikkara:r (He handed the cat the key to the pantry.)
(232) Don't put the fox to guard the henhouse.
(233) إنْ كان يِطُول شِبْر يقْطَع عَشْرَة 'in ka:n yiṭu:l shibr yi'ṭa` `ashra (If he can get one length [a hand's length], he will cut ten.
(234) Give him an inch and he'll take a yard.
(235) إن كُنْتم إخْوات اتْحَاسْبوا 'in kuntum ixwa:t iṭhasbu ([Even] if you were brothers check each other's account.)
(236) Short accounts make long friends.
(237) البَاب اللّي يِجي لَك مِنُّه الرّيح سِدُّه واسْتَرِيح 'ilba:b illi yigi:lak minnu rri:ḥ siddu wistari:ḥ (The door that gives you a draft close it and relax.)
(238) If you don't like the heat, get out of the kitchen.
(239) وَقْت القَضا يِعْمِي البَصَر wa't il'aḍa yi`mi lbaṣar (When fate strikes, one becomes blind.)
(240) You cannot escape your fate./There's no flying from your fate. {Cf. #208)

(241) النّظافَة مِن الإيمان والوَساخَة مِن الشَّيْطان 'innaẓa:fa mil'i:ma:n wilwasa:xa mishshayṭa:n (Cleanliness comes from godliness [/faith] and dirtiness from Satan.)

(242) Cleanliness is akin to godliness.

(243) الأعْمار بيَد اللّه 'il'a`ma:r byadi lla:h (How long people live is in God's hands.)

(244) There is no way of knowing when death will come; it just does.

(245) بَعْد ما شَاب وَدُّوه الكُتَّاب ba`di ma sha:b waddu:h ikkutta:b (After he had become an old man [Lit.had grown grey hair], they sent him to school.)

(246) You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

(247) التَّالْتَه تابْتَه 'ittalta tabta (The third time is sure.)

(248) The third time is a charm.

(249) تِبات نَار تِصْبَح رَماد لَها رَبّ يدَبَّرْها tiba:t na:r tizbaḥ ṛama:d laha rabbi yidabbarha (What is fire overnight becomes ashes in the morning ; God will take care of things.[i.e. Don't worry!])

(250) Time heals all wounds.

(251) إللّي فَات مَات 'illi fa:t ma:t (What is gone never comes back [Lit. is dead].)

(252) Let bygones be bygones.

(253) جَارَك قُدَّامَك ووَرَاك إنْ ما شاف وِشَّك يِشُوف قَفَاك ga:rak 'uddamak wi wara:k 'in ma sha:f wishshak yishu:f 'afa:k (Your neighbor is in front of you and behind you; if he does'nt see your face he will see your back [the back of your neck].)

(254) A neighbor is a person who knows more about your business than you do.

(255) الجُّوع كَافِر 'iggu:` ka:fir (Hunger is lawless [Lit.an infidel].) [Cf. 676]

(256) Hunger knows no friend.

(257) وافَقَ شَنٌ طَبقَه wa:faqa shannun ṭabaqa (The two are alike / compatible.)

(258) Each bird attracts its own.

(259) اللّي يِبُصّ لِبَلاوي النّاس تِهوُن عَلِيه بَلْوِتُه 'illi yibuṣṣi

libala:wi nna:s tihu:n `ale:h balwitu (He that looks at [other] people's misfortunes, will not mind his own.)
(260) However unfortunate we are, there are always people worse off than we are.

(261) حَبيبَك يِبْلَع لَك الزَّلَط وعَدوَّك يِتْمَنَّي لَك الغَلَط

habi:bak yibla` lak izzalat wi `aduwwak yitmanna:lak ilghalat (Your friend would ignore your blunders [Lit. swallow stones for you] and your enemy wishes that you would make mistakes.)
(262) Where there is no love, all faults are seen.

(263) حَضَّروا المَداوِد قَبْل حضُور البَقَر haddaru: lmada:wid 'abli hudu:r ilba'ar (They prepared the cows' mangers before there were any cows.)
(264) Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

(265) مَن قَدِّم شِئ الْتَقاه man 'addim she:' ilta'a:h (He that gives something will find it/ [get something in return]) .
(266) Give and you shall receive.

(267) الحَقّ اللِّي وَراه مُطَالِب ما يِمُوتْش 'ilha'' illi wara:h muta:lib ma yimutsh (The right that has a claimant will not be lost.)
(268) Right will prevail./ Right will last, and wrong cannot endure.

(269) الحِيطَة لَها ودَان 'ilhe:ta laha wida:n (A wall has ears.)
(270) Walls have ears./ The wall has ears and the plain has eyes.

(271) خُد الرَّفِيق قَبْل الطَّرِيق والجَّار قَبْل الدَّار

xud irrafi:' 'abl ittari:' wi gga:r 'abl idda:r (Choose [Lit. take] the companion before the journey and the neighbor before the house.)
(272) One is known by the company he keeps.

(273) الخِسَارَة اللِّي تعَلِّم مَكْسَب ilxisa:ra 'illi t`allim maksab (The loss that teaches is gain.)
(274) It is worth a loss to find out what some people are.

(275) الدُّنْيا بِدَل يُوم عَسَل ويُوم بَصَل 'iddunya bidal yo:m `asal wi yo:m basal (Life changes; one day it is sweet [honey] and one day it is bitter [onion].)
(276) Life is subject to ups and downs.

(277) رَبَّك رَبّ العَطا يِدِّي البَرْد علَي قَدِّ الغَطَا rabbak rabb il`ata yiddi lbardi `ala 'add ilghata (Your God is a God of giving; He fits the cold to the cover.)
(278) God fits the back to its burden. 47

(279) شَيِّلْني واشَيِّلَك shayyilni washayyilak (Help me carry [things] and I'll help you carry yours.)
(280) You scratch my back ; I'll scratch yours.

(281) رَيِّسين فِي المَرْكِب تِغْرَق rayyise:n filmarkib tighra' ([If there are]] two captains on board, the ship will sink.) [Cf. #503]
(282) Two captains will sink a ship.

(283) بَخْتَك يَابو بخِيت baxtak yabu bxi:t (It is a matter of luck.)
(284) You never know your luck until the wheel stops.

(285) كُلّ شِئ بِأوانُه kulli she:' bi 'awa:nu
(286) Everything has its time. / There is a place and time for everything.

(287) شِئ خِير مِن لا شِئ she:' xe:r min la she:' (Something is better than nothing.)
(288) Better something than nothing.

(289) زَيِّ الشّمْعَة تِحْرَق نَفْسَها وِتنوَّر عَلَي غِيرْها zayy ishssham`a tihra' nafsaha wi tnawwar `ala ghirha (Like a candle, it burns itself and gives light to others.)
(290) The candle does not give light to itself.

(291) فَقْد البَصَر أهْوَن مِن فقد البَصِيرَة faqd ilbasar 'ahwan min faqd ilbasi:ra (Loss of eyesight is less serious than the loss of insight.)
(292) There are none so blind as those who cannot/will not see./The eyes are of little use if the mind be blind.

(293) كُلِّ حَارَه ولَها غَجَر kulli ha:ra wi laha ghagar (Every lane has its wicked people.)
(294) There is a black sheep in every flock.

(295) الصَّبْر مُفْتاح الفَرَج 'issabri mufta:h ilfarag (Patience is the key to success / solution.) [Cf. #652]
(296) Patience is the key of paradise.

(297) الصّغار أحْبَاب اللّه 'issigha:r 'ahba:b alla:h (Children are God's beloved.)
(298) Children are love made visible.

(299) صَنْعة فِي اليَدّ أمَان مِن الفَقْر san`a filyaddi 'ama:n milfa'r (Having a skill is a security against poverty.)

(300) It may be hard to work, but it must be harder to want.

(301) الصِّيت وَلا الغِنَي 'issi:t wala lghina (Fame is better than riches.)

(302) Fame is better than fortune.

(303) العِين ما تعْلاش عَلي الحَاجِب 'il`e:n ma ti`la:sh `a lha:gib (The eye cannot be higher than the eyebrow.)

(304) However high the eye may rise, it will find the eyebrow above it.

(305) الضَّرورَة لَها أحْكَام 'iddaru:ra laha 'ahka:m (Necessity has its rules.)Cf. # 39

(306) Necessity knows no law.

(307) الطَّمَع يِقلّ ما جَمَع 'ittama` yi'illi ma gama` (Greed reduces what is gathered.)

(308) Greed often makes one poor.

(309) أشْكِي لمِين وكُلّ النَّاس مَجارِيح 'ashki lmi:n wi kull inna:s magari:h (To whom do I complain [when] everybody is suffering?)

(310) Every heart has its own ache.

(311) الأعْوَر بِين العُمْي سُلْطان 'il'a`war be:n il`umyi sulta:n (The one-eyed person is a king among the blind.)

(312) In the land of the blind, the one-eyed are kings.

(313) العَايِط في الفايِت نُقْصان عَقْل 'il`a:yit filfa:yit nu'sa:n `a'l (Crying over what is gone is folly.)

(314) It's folly to cry for spilt milk.

(315) العَجَلة عَطلَة 'il`agala `atala (Haste is delay.) [Cf.#339]

(316) Haste makes waste, and waste makes want.

(317) عَداوِة الأقارِب /القَرايِب زيِّ لَسْع العَقارِب `ada:awit il'aqa:rib / il'ara:yib zayyi las` il`a'a:rib (The enmity of relatives is like the stinging of scorpions.) [Cf. #138]

(318) A lot of relatives , a lot of trouble.

(319) خَيْر البِرّ عَاجِلُه xayru lbirri `a:gilu (Charity is best when it is prompt.)

(320) He gives twice who gives promptly./ The quickest generosity is the best.

(321) عَلَي لسَانِي ولا تِنْسانِي `ala lsa:ni wala tinsa:ni (To be [merely] mentioned is better than being forgotten.)

(322) Small favors are thankfully received.

(323) عَلِيل وعَامِل مِدَاوِي `ali:l wi`a:mil mida:wi (He is sick and yet is pretending to be a physician.)

(324) Physician, heal thyself.

(325) عُمْر الحَسُود ما يسُود `umr ilhasu:d ma ysu:d (The envious person never prevails.)

(326) Envy never dwells in a noble soul.

(327) عَمِلُوهَا الصُّغار وقعُوا فِيها الكُّبار `amalu:ha ssugha:r wi'`u fi:ha kkuba:r (The little ones did it and the big ones fell into it.)

(328) Small leaks sink big ships.

(329) عِين الحُبّ عَمْيَة `e:n ilhubbi `amya ((The eye of love is blind.)/ الحُبّ أعْمَي 'il hubbi 'a`ma

(330) Love is blind.

(331) عِيوبي لا أرَاهَا وعيوب النَّاس أجْرِي وَراهَا `iyu:bi la: 'ara:ha wi `iyu:b inna:s 'agri wara:ha (I don't see my faults, but I go after [other] people's faults .)

(332) We see the faults of others but not our own./ Man sees all the faults but his own.

(333) غَاب القُطّ الْعَب يَا فَار gha:b il'utt il`ab ya fa:r (The cat is gone, so you mouse, play !)

(334) While the cat's away, the mice will play.

(335) الغَالِي تَمَنُه فِيه 'ilgha:li tamanu fi:h (An expensive thing has its worth.)[Cf. #519]

(336) You get what you pay for./ Cheap things are not good, good things are not cheap.

(337) الجَنَّة تَحْت أقْدام الأُمَّهات 'igganna tahti 'aqda:m il'ummaha:t (Paradise is is at the feet of mothers.)

(338) Heaven is at the feet of mothers.

(339) في التَأنِّي السَّلامَة وفي العَجَلة النّدامَة

fi tta'anni ssala:ma wi fil`agala nnada:ma (There is safety in deliberate [action] and regret in haste.)

(340) More haste less speed./ Better safe than sorry.

(341) فَقْر بِلا دين هُوَ الغِنَي الكَّامِل fa'r bila de:n huwa lghina lkka:mil (Poverty without debt is perfect wealth.)

(342) Out of debt is riches enough.

(343) الفَقْر حِشْمَه والعِزّ بَهْدَله 'ilfa'r hishma wil`izzi bahdala (In poverty there is decency and in riches instability.)

(344) Poverty with security is better than plenty in the midst of fear and uncertainty.

(345) أوّل ما شَطَح نطَح 'awwil ma shaṭah nataḥ (He began by trying too much.)

(346) Eagles catch no flies.

(347) قِلّ مِن النَّدْر واوْفِي 'illi minnadr wiwfi (Promise less and keep your promise.)

(348) Promise little and do much.

(349) قَلْب المُؤْمِن دَليلُه 'alb ilmu'min dali:lu (The heart of the believer is his guide.)

(350) A good heart cannot lie.

(351) كُتْر العِتاب يِفَرَّق الأحْبَاب kutr il`ita:b yifarra' il'aḥba:b (Much reproach alienates [Lit. separates] close friends.)

(352) Contend not with the friend lest you make him an enemy.

(353) قِيرَاط بَخْت ولا فَدّان شَطَارَه 'ira:ṭ baxti wala fadda:n shaṭa:ra (A square rod of luck is better than an acre of smartness.)

(354) A pocketful of luck is better than a sackful of wisdom. / You don't need brains if you have luck.

(355) وَعَسَي أنْ تَكْرَهوا شَيْئًا وَهْو خَيْرٌ لَكُم wa `asa 'an takrahu shay'an wahwa xayrun lakum (You may hate something that turns out to be for your good.)

(356) A calamity is often a blessing in disguise.

(357) كِيد النِّساء يِغْلِب كِيد الرِّجال

ke:d innisa: yighlib ke:d irriga:l (Women's revenge beats men's.)

(358) The female of the species is more deadly than the male.

(359) تِطول يا لِيل علَي قَدّ ما تطول لا بُدّ مِن طلوع الفَجْر
titu:l ya le:l `ala 'addi ma ttu:l la budda min tulu:` ilfagr (However long the night may be, dawn must appear.)
(360) It is always darkest before dawn.

(361) مِن فات قديمُه تاه min fat 'adi:mu ta:h (He who abandons his past is lost.)
(362) Don't throw away the old till you know the new is better.

(363) إلّلي ما يعْجبُه يشْرَب مِن البَحْر 'illi mayi`gibu yishrab min ilbahr (If you don't like that, it is your problem [Lit drink from the river/sea]).)
(364) Put up or shut up.

(365) العَبْد فِي التَّفْكِير والرَّبّ فِي التَّدْبِير 'il`abdi fi ttafki:r wirrabbi fi ttadbi:r (Man thinks and God plans.)
(366) Man proposes and God disposes.

(367) كُلّ شِئ عَادَة حَتَّي العِبادَة kulli she:' `a:da hatta l`iba:da (Everything even worship is [a matter of] habit.)
(368) Old habits die hard.

(369) كُلّ شِئ في أوّله صَعْب kulli she:' fi 'awwilu sa`b (Everything at first is difficult.)
(370) The first step is the hardest.

(371) كُلّ شِيخ ولُه طَرِيقَه kulli she:x wi luh tari:'a (Every person [Lit. religious leader] has his own way.)
(372) Every man in his own way.

(372) كُلّ طَلْعَة ولَها نَزْلَة kulli tal`a wi laha nazla (Every going up has a comedown.)
(373) Everything /all/ that goes up must come down.

(374) كُلّ عُقْدَة ولَها حلاّ ل kulli `u'da wi laha halla:l (For every problem /knot, there is a person to solve/ disentangle it.)
(375) Every cloud has a silver lining.

(376) كِلّ كِلْمَة ولَها رَدّ kulli kilma w laha radd (Every argument [Lit.word] has its answer.)
(377) Every argument has its answer.

(378) كَلِّم القُطّ تِخَرْبشَك kallim il'utti tixarbishak (If you speak with the cat, she will scratch you.)

(379) He who plays with a cat must be expected to be scratched.

(380) الكَّلام الطَّيِّب يِنْخي 'ikkala:m ittayyib yinxi (Good words make [others] bend.)

(381) Soft words win a hard heart.

(382) اللَّبِيب بِالإشارَة يَفْهَمُ 'allabi:bu bil'isha:rati yafhamu (An intelligent person understands a [mere] hint.)

(383) To one who understands, few words are needed.

(384) كَلْب حَيّ خَيْرٌ مِن سَبْع مَيِّت kalbi hayyi xayrun min sab`i mayyit (A live dog is better than a dead lion.)

(385) Better live dog than dead lion./ A live dog is better than a dead lion.

(386) الكَّلْب في بِيتُه سَبْع 'ikkalbi fi be:tu sab` [Cf.#49]

(387) Every dog is a lion at home.

(388) الكَّلْب كَلْب ولَوْ كان طُوقُه دَهَب 'ikkalbi kalb walaw ka:n to:'u dahab (A dog is a dog even if its leash is gold.)

(389) Wash a dog, comb a dog: still a dog.

(390) الكَّلْب ما يعُضّش في ودْن اخوه 'ikkalbi ma y`uddish fi widni 'axu:h (A dog does not bite its brother's ear.)

(391) Dog does not eat dog.

(392) قَبْل ما يِبْلِي يِدبَّر 'abli ma yibli yidabbar (Before He afflicts, He provides a solution.)

(393) God fits the back to the burden.

(394) ما بَلاش إلاّ العَمَي والطُّرَاش ma bala:sh 'illa l`ama wi tturash (Nothing is free except blindness and deafness.)

(395) There is no such a thing as a free ride/ lunch.

(396) ما تِعْرَف خِيري إلاّ لَمّا تشُوف غِيري ma ti`raf xe:ri 'illa lamma tshu:f ghe:ri (You don't appreciate my value until you have seen someone else.)

(397) One never appreciates what he has until he has lost it.

(398) ما تِفْرحْشِ لِلّي رَاح لَمّا تشُوف اللّي يِيجي ma tifrahshi

lilli ra:ḥ lamma tshu:f illi yi:gi (Don't be glad about what/who is gone until you have seen what/ who is coming.)

(399) Don't throw away the old till you know the new is better.

(400) ما جَمَع إلاّ لمّا وفَّق ma gama` 'illa lamma waffa' (He brings [people] together only to make them compatible.)

(401) Each kind attracts its own.

(402) ما دام رايح كَتَّر مِن الفَضايِح ma da:m ra:yiḥ kattar milfaḍa:yiḥ (Since you are leaving, make plenty of scandals.)

(403) After us the deluge.

(404) مَال تِجيبُه الرِّياح تاخْدُه الزَّوابِع ma:l tigi:bu irriya:ḥ taxdu zzawa:bi` (Money that is brought by winds is taken away by storms.)

(405) Easy come, easy go.

(406) مَال الكُنَزي للنُّزَهي ma:l ikkunazi linnuzahi (The miser's money is for the fun lover.)

(407) A miser's son is a spendthrift.

(408) مالقُوش في الوَرْد عِيب قَالوا ياحْمَر الخَدِّين mal'u:sh filwardi `e:b 'a:lu yaḥmar ilxadde:n (They didn't find any fault in the roses, so they said,"You have red cheeks".)

(409) Nothing is easier than fault finding.

(410) ما يِمْلا عِين ابْنِ آدَم إلاّ التُّراب ma yimla `e:n ibni 'a:dam 'illa ttura:b (Nothing fills a man's eye [i.e. satisfies his desires] except dust.)

(411) The greedy never know when they have had enough.

(412) ما ينُوب المخَلِّص إلاّ تَقْطِيع هُدومُه ma ynu:b ilmuxalliṣ 'illa ta'ṭi:` hudu:mu (The savior gets nothing but the tearing of his clothes.)

(413) Kindness is lost upon an ungrateful man.

(414) المَتْعوس مَتْعوس ولَوْ عَلَّقوا عَلَي راسُه فانُوس 'ilmat`u:s mat`u:s walaw `alla'u `ala ra:su fanu:s (The unfortunate person will be unfortunate even if a lantern is put on his head.)

(415) The man born to misfortune will fall on his back and fracture his nose.

(416) مِرَاة الأبّ سُخْطَة مِن الرَّبّ mira:t il'abbi suxṭa mirrabb (A stepmother is a curse from God.)

(417) There are as many good stepmothers as white ravens.

(418) كُلِّ إنْسان في نَفْسُه سُلْطان kulli 'insa:n fi nafsu sul<u>t</u>a:n (Every human being is a king to himself.)

(419) Every man is a king in his own castle. / He who reigns within himself is more than a king.

(420) قَلْبي عَلي ولَدي انْفَطر وقَلْب ولَدي عَلَيَّ حجَر 'albi `ala waladi nfa<u>t</u>ar w'albi waladi `alayya <u>h</u>agar (I love my son but he is cruel to me. [Lit. My heart bleeds for my son and his is a heart of stone.)

(421) Bring up a raven and he'll pick out your eyes.

(422) المعيشَه تِحبّ طُولة البال 'ilma`i:sha ti<u>h</u>ibbi <u>t</u>u:lit ilba:l (Life needs patience.)

(423) The remedy for hard times is to have patience.

(424) يصوم يصوم ويفْطَر علي بصَله yi<u>s</u>u:m yi<u>s</u>u:m wiyif<u>t</u>ar `ala ba<u>s</u>ala (After a long fast he gets only an onion to eat.)

(425) To work hard, live hard, die hard, and go to hell after all would be hard indeed.

(426) رَحِمَ اللّه مَن عَرفَ قَدْره ra<u>h</u>ima <u>ll</u>a:h man `arafa qadrah (May God have mercy on him who knows his worth/limits.)
It's a wise man who knows his own limitations.

(427) إلْهِي الكَّلْب بعَضْمَه 'ilhi ikkalbi bi`a<u>d</u>ma (Distract a dog with a bone.)

(428) Satisfy a dog with a bone.

(429) خَلَّص تارَك مِن جَارَك xalla<u>s</u> ta:rak min ga:rak (Get even with your neighbor.)

(430) Don't get mad, get even.

(431) رَبِّنا ما سَاوانا إلاّ بِا لمُوت rabbina ma sa:wa:na 'illa bilmo:t (It is only through death that God made us equal.)

(432) Death is a great leveler.

(433) بِلادي وإنْ جارَت عَلَيَّ عَزيزَة bila:di wa'in ga:rat `alayya `azi:za (My country even when unfair to me is dear to me.)

(434) My country, right or wrong. [Cf. #644]

(435) المَقْروص مِن التِّعبان يِخا ف مِن الحَبْل 'ilma'ru:<u>s</u> m itti`ba:n yixa:f mil<u>h</u>abl (He that has been bitten by a snake is

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

afraid of a rope.)
(436) A man once bitten by a snake will jump at the sight of a rope in his path.

(437) مِن أعْطَي سِرّه لمْراتُه يا طُول عَذابُه وشتاتُه min ‘a`ṭa sirru limra:tu ya ṭu:L `aza:bu wishata:tu (He that reveals his secret to his wife will suffer and feel distracted for long.) [Cf. #533]
(438) If it is a secret, don't tell it to a woman.

(439) مِن رِضِي بِقَلِيلُه عاش min riḍi b’ali:lu ‘a:sh (He that is content with little will survive.)
(440) To be content with little is true happiness.

(441) إلِّي يطَا طِي لَها تفُوت ’illi yiṭa:ṭi laha tfu:t (He that stoops will let [problems] pass.)
(442) Stoop low and it will save you many a bump through life.

(443) القلوب عنْد بعْضها ‘il’ulu:b `ani ba`ḍaha (To be thinking of each other [Lit. Hearts are with each other] .)
(444) There is a road from heart to heart.

(445) مِن كرَهه رَبُّه سلَّط عَلِيه بَطْنُه man karahu rabbu sallaṭ `ale:h baṭnu (He that God hates will be a slave to his stomach.)
(446) The more you eat, the more you want.

(447) مَن يَزْرع شِئ يَحْصُده *man yazra` she:’ yaḥṣudu* (What one sows one reaps.)
(448) As you sow, so you reap.

(449) مَطْرح ما تِرْسي دُق لها maṭraḥ ma tirsi du’’ilha (Go where things take you .)
(450) Take things as they are.

(451) الوِقايَة خَيْرٌ مِنَ العِلاج ’ilwiqa:ya xayrun min al`ila:g (Protection is better than treatment.)
(452) Prevention is better than cure.

(453) لا نَبيّ بِلا كَرامَة إلاّ في وَطنه la nabiyya bila kara:ma ‘illa fi waṭanu
(454) No prohet is without honor except in his own country.

(455) الهَدْم أسْهَل مِن البِناء ’ilhadmi ‘as-hal milbina: (Destruction is easier than construction.)
(456) It is easier to pull down than to build up.

(457) ما محبّه إلاّ بَعْد عَداَوة ma mhabba 'illa ba`di `ada:wa
(There is no love except after enmity.)
(458) The quarrel of lovers is the renewal of love.
(459) كُلِّ شئ لُه سَبب kulli she:' luh sabab (Everything has a reason.)
(460) There is reason in the roasting of eggs.
(461) العِلْم نُور 'il`ilmu nu:r (Knowledge is light.)
(462) Knowledge is power.
(463) كُلِّ الطُّرق تُؤَدِّي إلي رُوما kull itturu' tu'addi 'ila ro:ma (All roads lead to Rome.) / سِكِّة أبُو زِيد كُلّهامَسالِك sikkit 'abu ze:d kullaha masa:lik
(464) All roads lead to Rome.
(465) إللِّي سَبق أكَل النَّبَق 'illi saba' 'akal innaba' (He that is early eats the fruit.)
(466) The early bird catches the worm.
(467) الاعْتِراف بِالحقِّ فَضِيلَة 'ili`tira:f bilha''i fadi:la (Admitting the truth is a virtue.)
(468) Tell the truth and shame the devil.
(469) خطْوَة بخَطْوة xatwa bxatwa
(470) One step at a time.
(471) نقُول طُور يقُول احْلِبوه ni'u:l to:r yi'u:l ihlibu: (We say it's an ox and he says : milk it.)
(472) You cannot get blood from a stone.
(473) مدّ رِجْلَك عَلي قَدِّ لحافَك middi riglak `ala 'addi lhafak (Stretch your leg as far as your cover goes.)
(474) Everyone stretches his legs according to the length of his coverlet./ Stretch your arm no further than your sleeve will reach.
(475) يَكْفي اليَوْم شَرُّه yakfi lyawma sharru
(476) Sufficient unto the day is the evil therof.
(477) لا تَدَع الشَّمْس تَغْرُب علي غَضَبك la tada` ishshamsi taghrub `ala ghadabak
(478) Never let the sun go down on your anger.

(479) لا جَديد تَحْت الشَّمْس la gadi:da taḥta shshams

(480) There is nothing new under the sun.

(481) كُلّ وَاحِد وذوقُه kulli wa:ḥid wizo:'u (Everyone has his own taste.)

(482) Every man to his taste./ Tastes differ.

(483) الشَّجَرة تُعَرف مِن ثِمارها 'ishshagara tu`raf min thima:riha

(484) The tree is known by its fruit.

(485) الاتِّحاد قُوَّة 'alittiḥa:du quwwa

(486) Union is strength.

(487) إسْأل مِجَرّب ولا تِسْأل طَبِيب 'is'al migarrab wala tis'al ṭabi:b (Ask an experienced person rather than a physician.)

(488) Experience is the better teacher.

(489) الوَقْت بِيجْري 'ilwa'ti biyigri (Time goes fast [Lit.runs].)

(490) Time flies.

(491) كُلّ واحِد لُه يُوم (kulli wa:ḥid luh yo:m (Everyone has his day.)

(492) Today you; tomorrow me.

(493) إضْحَك يضْحَك لَك العا لَم 'iḍhak yiḍhak laka l`a:lam

(494) Laugh and the world laughs with you.

(495) سبَع صَنايِع والبَخْت ضا يِع saba` ṣana:yi` wilbaxti ḍa:yi` (Seven skills and no luck.)

(496) Jack of all trades and master of none.

(497) ما حَدِّش أحْسَن مِن حَدّ ma ḥaddish 'aḥsan min ḥadd (All are equal.[Lit.No one is better than another.])

All men are created equal.

(498) لَك يُوم يَا ظَالِم lak yo:m ya ẓa:lim (O unjust person, you will have your day [in court],)

(500) Justice will be done.

(501) سَاعة الحَظّ ما تتْعوّضْش sa:`t ilḥaẓẓ ma tit`awwaḍsh (Fun time not be compensated .)

(502) Christmas comes but once a year.

(503) إذا كتْرت النوتيِّة غرْقت المَرْكب 'iza kitrit innutiyya ghir'it ilmarkib (If there re too many sailors, the boat would sink.)
(504) Too many cooks spoil the broth. [Cf.281]
(505) صَاحِب المال تَعْبان sa:hib ilma:l ta`ba:n (He that has money has trouble.)
(506) Much coin, much care.
(507) كُتْر الهزار يقَلِّل المَقام kutr ilhiza:r yi'allil ilma'a:m (Too much kidding lowers esteem.)
(508) Familiarity breeds contempt.
(509) لا احبّك ولا اقْدَر علي بُعْدَك lahibbak wala'dar `ala bu`dak (I don't love you ; neither can I be away from you.)
(510) Inconsistency is the only thing in which men are consistent.
(511) لَيْس فِي الإمْكان أبْدَع مِمّا كان laysa fil'imka:n 'abda` mimma ka:n (It couldn't have been better.)
(512) All's for the best to the best of all possible worlds.
(513 الدُّنْيا لا تخَلّي الرَّاكِب رَاكِب ولا الماشِي مَاشِي 'iddunya la txalli irra:kib ra:kib wala lma:shi ma:shi (Life [Lit. the world] does not allow the rider to keep on riding or the walker to keep on walking.)
(514) Times change and we with time.
(515) إللِّي ما تعْرَفُه إعْرَف أصْحابُه 'illi ma ti`rafu 'i`raf isha:bu (If you don't know a person, get to know his friends.)
(516) Tell me who your companions are and I'll tell you who you are.Tell me whom you associte with and I will tell you who you are.
(517) إسْعَي يا عَبْد وانا أسْعَي معَاك 'is`a ya `abd wana s`a m`a:k (O Worshiper! Work and I [i.e. Heaven] will work with you.
(518) Help yourself and heaven will help you.
(519) ما يغُرّك/يعْجبَك رُخْصُه ترْمي نُصّه ma yighurrak/yi`gibak ruxsu tirmi nussu (You will throw away half of that whose cheapness deceives / pleases you.)
(520) Cheap goods always prove expensive./Cheapest is dearest.
(521) البَرْمِيل الفَاضِي يرِنّ 'ilbarmi:l ilfa:di yirinn (The empty barrel rings.)

(522) The empty barrel makes the most noise.

(523) ما ينُوب الكَدّاب إلاّ سَواد وِشُّه ma ynu:b ikkadda:b 'illa sawa:d wishshu (A liar will only end up losing face [Lit. having a black face].)

(524) Lies do harm only to them that tell 'em.

(525) مِنْ رِضِي بقَليلُه عَاش min ridi b'ali:lu `a:sh (He who is content with the little he has will survive [Lit. will live].)

(526) To be content with little is true happiness.

(527) من قَرّ بِذنْبه غَفر اللّه لُه min 'arri bzanbu ghafar alla luh (He who confesses his guilt is forgiven by God.)

(528) Confession is good for the soul./A fault confessed is half redressed.

(529) أمْر اللّه نَافذ 'amru lla:h na:fiz (God's command must be carried out.)

(530) What must be, must be./Ours's not to reason why.

(531) فَرْحان بِشَبابُه farha:n bishaba:bu (He delights in his youth.)

(532) Youth will have its fling.

(533) السِّتّات ما تكْتمْش سِرّ 'issitta:t ma tiktimshi sirr. (Women don't keep a secret.) [Cf. #437]

(534) A woman cannot keep a secret./Tell a woman and you tell the world.

(535) إبْحَث عَنِ المَرْأة 'ibhath `an ilmar'a

(536) Cherchez la femme.

(537) يِصْطَاد في المَاء العَكِر yista:d filma:' il`akir (to fish in muddy water)

(538) To fish in troubled/muddy water.

(539) كُلُّه يِطْلَع في الغَسيل kullu yitla` filghasi:l

(540) It will all come out in the wash.

(541) لا خَفي إلاّ وسَيُعْلَن la xafi 'illa wa sayu`lan (Whatever is hidden will be made public.)

(542) The truth will out.

(543) صَاحِب بالين كدّاب وصَاحِب تَلاتَه منافِق sa:hib bale:n

kadda:b wsa:hb tala:ta mna:fi''akbar minnak yo:m yi`raf 'aktar minnak bi sana (A person of two opinions is a liar and one of three is a hypocrite.)

(544) Beware of the man of two faces.

(545) ضَرْب الحَبِيب زَيّ أكْل الزِّبيب darb ilhabi:b zayyi 'akl izzibi:b (Being beaten by a lover is like eating raisins.)

(546) A blow from a lover is as sweet as eating raisins.

(547) وَجَع سَاعَه وَلا كُلّ سَاعَه waga` sa:`a wala kulli sa:`a (Pain for one hour is better than pain every hour.)

(548) Save pains by taking pains.

(549) الوِحْدَه ولا الرَّفيق المُتاعِب 'ilwihda wala rrafi:' ilmuta:`ib (Better alone than having an annoying companion.)

(550) Better alone than in bad company.

(551) وُقوع البَلا ولا انْتظارُه wi'u:` ilbala wala ntiza:ru (Suffering misfortune is better than anticipating it.) Apprehension of evil is often worse than the evil itself.

(552 مصير الحَيّ يلْتَقي misi:r ilhayy yilti'y (The living [persons] are bound to meet [someday].

(553) Where there's life there is hope.

(554) يا فاحِت البِير ومغَطِّيه لابُدّ مِن وقُوعَك فِيه ya fa:hit ilbi:r wi mghatti:h la budda min wi'u:`ak fi:h (O you who are digging a pit [Lit. a well] and covering it, will inevitably fall into it.)

(555) If you dig a pit for someone else, you fall into it yourself.

(556) يِحْلِف لي أَصَدّقُه أشُوف امُورُه أسْتَعْجِب yihlif li: 'asadda'u 'ashu:f 'umuru 'asta`gib (He swears and I believe him; I see what he does and I'm baffled.)

(557) There are some who preach beautifully but practice not their doctrine./ Judge a man by his deeds, not by his words.

(558) الوَلد ولَد ولَوْ حكَم بَلد 'ilwalad walad walaw hakam balad (A boy will be a boy even if he were to rule a country.)

(559) Boys will be boys.

(560) كُلّ شئ ولُه قانُون kulli she:' luh qanu:n (Everything has a law.)

(561) Order is heaven's first law.

(562) تَمخَّض الجَبل فَولَد فَأْراً tamaxxada lgabalu fawalada fa'ran

(563) A mountain in labor brought forth a mouse.

(564) الصِّحّةُ تاجٌ علي رُؤوس الأصِحّاء لا يَشْعر بِها إلاّ المَرْضَي 'assihhatu ta:gun `ala ru'u:s il'asihha:' la yash`uru biha 'illa lmarda (Health is a crown on the heads of the healthy of which only the sick are aware.)

(565) Health is not valued till sickness comes.

(566) السِّجْن يغُور ولَوْ في جنينَه 'issign yighu:r walaw fi gne:na (Prison even in a garden is to be rejected.)

(567) A golden cage is still a cage.

(568) العِلْم في كُلّ زَمَن لُه قيمه و ثَمَن 'il`ilm fi kulli zaman luh 'i:ma wtaman (Knowledge is always valuable.)

(569) Knowledge is better than wealth.

(570) يا معَزي بعْد سَنه يا مجَدد الأحْزان ya m`azzi ba`d sana ya mgaddid il'ahza:n (You who offer condolences after a year, are renewing sorrow.)

(571) When sorrow is asleep, wake it not.

(572) الطَّبْع يغْلِب التَطبُّع 'ittab` yighlib ittatabbu` (Natural propensity/nature is stronger than nurture/ training.)

(573) Old habits die hard.

(574) الصَّبْر طَيِّب 'issabri tayyib (Patience is good.)

(575) A moment's patience is a ten-years' comfort.

(576) حَاجَه تفَرّح العِيال ha:ga tfarrah il`iya:l (It's something that will make little minds [Lit. the children] happy.)

(577) Little things please little minds.

(578) فَرّق تَسُد farra' tasud (If you divide, you will rule.)

(579) Divide and rule.

(580) الهدُوء بَعْد العاصِفَه ilhudu' ba`d il`a:sifa (Calm [comes] after the storm.)

(581) After a storm comes a calm.

(582) لِكُلِّ قاعدَه اسْتِثْناء likulli qa:`da 'istisna:'

(583) There is an exception to every rule. 62

(584) يَامَا في الدُّنْيا عَجايِب ya:ma fi ddunya `aga:yib (The world is full of wonders.)

(585) Wonders will never cease.

(586) شَرّ أهْوَن مِن شَرّ sharri 'ahwan min sharr (One evil is less than another.)

(587) Of two evils choose the less.

(588) الفَقْر مِش عِيب 'ilfa'ri mish `e:b (Poverty is no disgrace.)

(589) Poverty is not a crime./ Poverty is no digrace, but it is a great inconvenience.

(590) لا يَفلّ الحَديد إلاّ الحَديد la yafill ilhadi:d 'illa lhadi:d (Only iron can cut iron.)

(591) Fight fire with fire./ Diamond cuts diamond.

(592) المَظاهِر خَدّاعَه 'ilmaza:hir xadda:`a

(593) Appearances are deceptive.

(594) السّعْد وَعْد 'issa`d wa`d (Good fortune is matter of luck.)

(595) When fortune knocks, open the door.

(596) يِدّي الحَلَق لللّي بِلا ودَان والفُول لللّي بِلا أسْنان yiddi lhala' lilli bila wda:n wilfu:l lilli bila sna:n (He gives earrings to the one without ears and beans to the one without teeth.)

(597) The Gods send nuts to those who have no teeth.

(598) مَن جَدَّ وَجَد man gadda wagad (He who works hard will achieve his goal [Lit. find].)

(599) Something is better than nothing.

(600) العَجَله مِن الشَّيْطان 'il`agala mishshayta:n (Haste is from the devil.

(601) The more haste the less speed.

(602) كُلّ وَاحِد مَسْئول مِن عَرْقوبه kulli wa:hid mas'u:l min `ar'u:bu (Everyone is responsible for himself[Lit. from his vein].)

(603) Every herring must hang by its gill.

(604) يِخْلَق مِن ظَهْر العالِم جاهِل yixla' min dahr il`a:lim ga:hil (Out of a savant an ignorant person is born.)

(605) Clergymen's sons always turn out bad.

(606) إذا زَاد الشِّئ عَن حَدّه إنْقلَب إلي ضدّه 'iza zada shshay'u

`an haddih 'inqlaba 'ila diddah (When something goes to extremes, it turns into its opposite.)

(607) Extremes meet./ Opposite extremes have much in common.

(608) الحَسَنه إنْ جَازِت علَي الغَرِيب يِبْقي القَرِيب أوْلي

'ilhasana 'in ga:zit `alghari:b yib'a l'ari:b 'awla (If charity is permitted toward a stranger, then a relative should take priority.)

(609) Charity begins at home.

(610) رَبِّنا قَبْل ما خلَق الدَّاء خلَق لُه دَواء rabbina 'abli ma xala' idda:' xala'lu dawa:' (Before our God created a disease He created a remedy for it.)

(611) There is a remedy for everything, could men find it/could we but hit upon it.

(612) هِين قرْشَك ولاَ تهين نَفْسَك hi:n 'irshak wala tihi:n nafsak

(Abuse [Lit. insult] your money not yourself.)

(613) Make money your servant, not your master.

(614) إللِّي يِعْرَف عِيوب رُوحه ما يِجْرِيش وَرا عيوب النَّاس

'illi yi`raf `iyu:b ro:hu ma yigri:sh wara `iyu:b inna:s (He that knows his own faults does not pursue [other] people's faults.) /

إللّي بِيتُه مِن قِزاز ما يحْدِفْشِي النَّاس بالطُّوب 'illi be:tu min 'iza:z ma yihdifshi nna:s bittu:b

(615) People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

(616) يا واخد القرد علي كتر ماله المال يفني والقرد يفضل علي حالُه ya wa:xid il'ird `la kutr ma:lu 'ilma:l yifna wil'irdi yifdal `ala ha:lu (If you are marrying the monkey for its money, the money will perish and the monkey will remain unchanged.)

(617) If you marry for money, you sell your freedom.

(618) تَقَمّشوا بِالقُماش يُحَيِّيكم النَّاس بِلا اعْتِبار

taqammashu bilquma:sh yuhayyi:kum inna:s bila `tiba:r (Dress well and people will take notice of you [Lit. salute you] regardless.)

(619) Good clothes open doors.

(620) يِبيع جِلْد الدِّيب قَبْل ما يصِيدُه yibi:` gild iddi:b 'abli ma yisi:du (He sells the wolf's skin before he catches it.)

(621) Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

(622) اعْمِل اللِّي عَليك والْباقِي عَلي اللّه 'i`mil illi `ale:k

wilba:'i `ala lla (Do your best and God will do the rest.
(623) Work as if everything depended on you; pray as if everything depended on God.

(624) إللّي يجْني الوَرْد ما يسْلَمْشي مِن الشُّوك 'illi yigni lwardi ma yislamshi mishsho:k (He that plucks the roses cannot avoid the thorns.)
(625) You cannot pluck roses without fear of thorns.

(626) يَا حْنين يا مْنين إطْعِم الفُمّ تسْتحي العين ya ḥne:n ya mne:n 'iṭ`im ilfumm tistiḥi il`e:n (O ḥne:n! O mne:n ! Feed the mouth and the eye will be submissive.)

الوصُول إلَي قَلْب الرَّجُل عَن طَرِيق مِعْدته 'ilwuṣu:l 'ila qalb irragul `an tar:q mi`ditu
(627) The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

(628) الإيد اللّي ما تِقْدَرْش تعُضّها بُوسْهَا 'il'i:d illi ma ti`darshi t`uddaha bus-ha
(629) Kiss the hand that you cannot bite.

(630) إللّي تِزْرَعُه تِقْلَعُه 'illi tizra`u ti'la`u
(631) You shall reap what you sow.

(632) كُلّ طَلْعَه ولَها نَزْلَه kulli tal`a wi laha nazla (Every ascendance has descendance.)
(633) What goes up comes down.

(634) البَركَه في اللَّمَّه 'ilbaraka fillamma (It is good to be with a crowd.)
(635) Safety in numbers.

(636) بُكْرَه يدُوب الثّلْج ويبَان المَرْج bukra yidu:b ittalg wiyba:n ilmarg (Tomorrow snow will melt and the grass will appear.
(637) The truth will be out.

(638) خُدِي شَايِب يدَلّعك وَلا تَخْدي صَبي يلَوّعك xudi sha:yib yidalla`ik wala taxdi ṣabi yilawwa`ik (Take an old man that will pamper you and not a young man that will mistreat you.)
(639) Better an old man's darling, than a young man's warling.

(640) لا مِنّه ولا كفايَة شَرُّه la minnu wala kfayit sharru (He neither helps nor stops hurting.)
(641) Like the dog in the manger, he will neither eat nor let others eat.

(642) اذْكُروا مَحاسِن مَوْتاكُم 'uzkuru maḥa:sin mawta:kum (Speak of the good deeds of your dead.)

(643) Speak well of the dead.

(644) بِلادي وإنْ ضَنَّت عَليَّ كَرِيمَة bila:di wa'in ḍannat `alayya kari:ma (Even if stingy toward me, my country is [still] generous.)

(645) My country, right or wrong. [Cf. #433]

(646) كُلْ واشْرَب وخَلِّي الدِّنْيا تِخْرَب kul wishrab wi xalli ddinya tixrab (Eat and drink and let the world go to ruins.)

(647) Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die.

(648) ما تِيجي الطّوبَه إلاّ في المعْطوبَه ma ti:gi ṭṭu:ba 'illa filma`ṭu:ba (One misfortune follows another.)

(649) The misfortunes never come single.

(650) مَطْرَح ما تَامِن خاف maṭraḥ ma t'a:min xa:f (Fear where you feel secure.)

(651) Danger is next neighbor to security.

(652) كُلِّ شيءْ دَوَاه الصَّبْر لَكِن قِلِّة الصَّبْر مَالْهَاش دَوَا kulli she:' dawa:h iṣṣabr la:kin 'illit iṣṣabr malha:sh dawa (Patience is a remedy for everything, but lack of patience has no remedy.)

(653) Patience is a remedy for every sorrow.

(654) الأدَب فضّلوه عَنِ العِلْم 'il'adab faḍḍalu:h `an il`ilm (Politeness is preferred to knowledge.)

(655) Knowledge is nothing when good breeding is lacking.

(656) يِموت الزَمّار وصباعُه يِلْعَب yimu:t izamma:r wiṣuba:`u yil`ab (The piper dies even as his finger plays.)

(657) Habit is a second nature.

(658) لا تؤجِّل عَمَل اليَوْم إلَي الغَد la: tu'aggil `amal ilyawm 'ila lghad. (Don't put off today's work to tomorrow.)

(659) Never put off to tomorrow what may be done today.

(660) الدُّنْيا تَلاهي حازوها المَلاهي وسابوها كما 'iddunya tala:hi hazu:ha lmalahi wisabu:ha kamahi(It is a world of distraction taken by fun lovers and left as it is.)

(661) In spite cf colleges and schools, the world remains a ship of fools.

(662) المَعْروف سَيِّد الأحْكام 'ilma`ru:f sayyid il'aḥka:m 66

(Kindness is the master rule.)
(663) Kindness is greater than law.
(664) إدّيني عُمْر وارْميني في البَحْر 'iddi:ni `umr wirmi:ni filbahr (Give me life and throw me into the sea.)
(665) Give a man luck and throw him in the sea.
(666) قِرْد موافِق ولا غَزال شارِد 'ird mwa:fi' wala ghaza:l sha:rid (An accommodating ugly wife is better than an unruly pretty one.)
(667) A quiet wife is mighty pretty.
(668) إلّلي ما يشْقَي ما يلْقَي 'illi ma yish'a ma yil'a (He who does not work hard will not succeed [Lit. find].)
(669) Unless you work hard, you cannot succeed.
(670) الغاية تبَرِّر الوَسيلَة 'ilgha:ya tubarrir ilwasi:la
(671) The end justifies the means.
(672) آخِر الدّلَع النّدامَه '0:xir iddala` innadama (Pampering ends in regret.)
(673) Pampering a child is like a bear's hug; it may crush to death.
(674) المال أصْل كُلِّ الشّرور 'ilma:l 'asli kull ishshuru:r
(675) Money is the root of all evil.
(676) الجعان ياكل الزلط 'igga`a:n ya:kul izzalat (A hungry person will eat anything [Lit.pebbles].)
(677) No bread is bad to the hungry.
(678) العِلْم في الصِّغَر كالنَّقْش علي الحجَر 'il`ilmu fissighar kannaqshi `alhaggar (Learning when young is like carving on stone.)
(679) Youth and white paper take any impression.
(680) ما يمْدَح في نفْسُه إلا ابْليس ma yimdah fi nafsu 'illa 'ibli:s (Only Satan praises himself.)
(681) The worst praise is self-praise.
(682) اسْأل قَبْل ما تناسِب تِعْرَف الَّردي مِن المُناسِب 'is'al 'abli ma tna:sib ti`raf irrady milmuna:sib (If you inquire before you marry, you will tell the bad from the appropriate.)
(683) Marry in haste and repent at leisure.
(684) المال السّايِب يعلِّم السِّرْقَة 'ilma:l issa:yib yi`allim issir'a (Unguarded money invites [Lit. teaches] stealing.)
(685) A bad padlock invites picklock.

Classifying Proverbs

A- Some Common Themes in Proverbs

Proverbs and proverbial phrases not only express advice and wisdom but also vividly depict, often in metaphorical terms (See Metaphors below.), a wide range of human experience. They portray attitudes, feelings and moods as illustrated by the following examples taken from Egyptian Arabic. Some may have been given before.

1- Fun or having a great time.

ساعة الحظ ما تتعوضش sa:`t ilhazzi ma tit`awwadsh (Having a great time cannot be made up for .)

2- Hesitation between two choices:

عين في الجنة وعين في النار `e:n figganna wi`e:n finna:r (Lit. one eye in paradise and one eye in hell.)

3- Courteous response to a request:

غا لي والطلب رخيص gha:li wittalab rixi:s (The request is expensive but [for you] it is easy [Lit. cheap] to grant .)

4- A format for polite rejection of a deal:

بين البايع والشاري يفتح الله be:n ilba:yi` w ishsha:ri yiftah alla (Lit. Between the seller and the buyer may God [help].)

5- Hypocrisy:

في الوِشّ مرايَة وفي القَفا سلاية filwishshi mra:ya wifil 'afa silla:ya (In your presence he is very nice, but he would stab you in the back. [Lit A mirror to one's face but a thorn in the back of one's neck.)

6- The Ingratitude of children toward their parents:

قَلْبي علي وَلدي انْفطر وقلْب وَلدي عليّ«خوث وشغ اشدثْ حَجر 'albi `ala waladi nfatar wi'albi waladi 'alayya hagar (My heart was broken for my son, but toward me he had a heart of stone.)

7- The Importance of luck:

قيراط حظ ولا فدان شطارة 'irat hazz wala fadda:n shata:ra (A rod of luck is better than an acre of cleverness.)

8- The power of natural propensity:

الطَّبْع غلاّب 'ittab`i ghalla:b (Propensity is most powerful.)

9- Betrayal of another person's trust:

راح يخْطُبْها له اتجوّزها ra:h yixtubha: lu iggawwizha (He went to arrange her engagement to him [i.e. a friend]; instead, he married her.

10- The result of not listening to advice (I told you so.):

اللّي ما يسْمع ياكُل لمّا يشْبَع 'illi ma yisma` yakul lamma yishba` (He that does not listen [to advice] will suffer a lot.)

11- The effect of bad experience:

اللي اتْلسَع مِن الشُّوربة ينفُخ في الزَبادي 'illi tlasa` mishshurba yinfux fizzaba:di (He that hurts from [very hot] soup will blow air on [cold] yogurt.)

12- Keeping busy to no purpose:

ما لقاش شاغِل يشْغلُه فتَح الباب وقَعد يقْفلُه mal'a:sh sha:ghil yishghilu fatah ilba:b wi'a`ad yi'filu (He didn't find anything to keep him busy, so he opened the door and kept shutting it.)

13- Human imperfection:

الحلْو ما يكْمَلْش 'ilhilw ma yikmalsh (The nice/sweet person is never perfect.)

14- Resignation and submission to God's will in time of adversity:

اللّه جاب الله أخَد الله عَليه العوَض 'alla ga:b 'alla 'axad 'alla `ale:h il`awad (God gave and God has taken ; God will compensate.

15- Optimism in time of difficulty:

كُلّ عُقْدَة ولها حلاّل kulli `u'da wilaha halla:l (Lit. Every knot has someone to unravel it./Every cloud has a silver lining.

16- Pessimism /Hopelessness:

الحَزينَة جات تفْرَح ما لقت لَها مَطْرح 'ilhazi:na gat tifrah ma la'at laha matrah (The woman in sorrow was about to have joy, but she didn't find a place for her.)

17- Wishful thinking:

كِلْمة يا رِيت ما عَمَّرت ولا بيت kilmit ya re:t ma `ammarit wala be:t (The expression "I wish" has never brought prosperity to a home .)

18- Describing a good bargain:

كويّس ورخيّص وابْن ناس kwayyis wirxayyis wibni na:s (Good, inexpensive and high quality)

19- Good riddance:

المَرْكِب اللّي توَدّي أحْسَن مِن اللي تجِيب 'ilmarkib illi twaddi 'ahsan milli tgi:b (The boat that takes [people away] is better than the one that brings [them].)

20- Marrying an older woman:

مِن هَمُّه خَد واحْدَه قد امُّه min hammu xad wahda 'add ummu (To add to his trouble, he married someone old enough to be his mother.)

21- Bias / conflict of interest:

مِين يشْهَد للعَروسَه غير امّها mi:n yish-had lil`aru:sa ghe:r ummaha (Who else would recommend the bride but her mother?)

22- Boys will be boys:

الوَلد وَلد ولَوْ حَكم بَلد 'ilwalad walad walaw hakam balad (A boy is a boy even if he were to rule a country.)

23- Being nice / considerate:

جَبْر الخَواطِر gabr ilxawa:tir (A matter of courtesy/ being nice)

24- Dealing with growing children:

إن كِبر ابْنَك خَاويه ، لا تَا خُد مِنُّه ولا تدِّيه 'in kibir ibnak xawi:h la ta:xud minnu wala tiddi:h (When your son is grown up,treat him as a brother; don't take from him or give him.)

25- Checking the neighborhood before choosing a house:

شوف الجَّار قَبْل الدَّار shu:f igga:r 'abl idda:r (Check out the neighbor before the house.)

26- The helplessness of a stranger:

الغَريب أعْمي ولَو بَصير 'ilghari:b 'a`ma walaw basi:r (A stranger is blind though he can see.)

27- Favoritism/ Having a powerful relative :

إللّي لُه ضَهْر ما ينْضَربْش علَي بَطْنُه 'illi luh dahr ma yindarabshi `ala batnu (He that has a back [i.e. someone to back him] will not be hit on the stomach.)

28- Inconsistency / Contradiction:

يصَلّي الفَرْض وينْقُب الأرْض yisalli lfard wyin'ub il'ard (He says his prayers and wreaks havoc with the earth.)

29- The power of nice words:

الكَلْمَة الحلْوَة تقْضي الحاجَة 'ikkilma lhilwa ti'di lha:ga (A sweet word will open doors.)

30- Work ethics:

العَمل عِبَادَة 'il`amal `iba:da (Work is [like] worship.)

31- Futility of complaining:

الشّكْوي لغِير الله مَذلّة 'ishshakwa lighe:r alla mazalla (Complaining to anyone but God is humiliation.)

32- Strength of heredity:

العِرْق يمدّ لسابِع جِدّ 'il`ir' yimiddi lisa:bi` gidd (Herdity [Lit. vein] extends to the seventh ancestor.)

33- Injustice:

يامَا في الحَبْس مَظالِيم ya:ma fi lhabs mazali:m (There are lots of people unjustly put in prison.)

34- It couldn't be worse:

ضَربوا الأعْوَرعلي عينُه، قال خَسْرانَه خسرانه darabu l'a`war `ala `e:nu 'a:l xasra:na xasra:na ([When] the one-eyed was struck on the eye, he said it was already lost.)

35- Old habits die hard:

رِجْعِت رِيمَة لعادِتها القَديمة rig`it rl:ma li`adit-ha il'adi:ma (Reema went back to its old habit.)

36- Ingratitude:

بالتِّبْر لَم بِعْتكُم بالتِّبْن بِعْتوني، في البَحْر لم فُتُّكم، في البَرّ فُتُّوني bittibri lam bi`tukum bittibni bi`tu:ni filbahri lam futtukum filbarri futtu:ni (For gold I didn't sell you; for hay you sold me - At sea I didn't abandon you: on land you deserted me.)

37- A grandson is very special:

أعَزّ الوِلْد وِلْد الوِلْد 'a`azz ilwildi wild ilwild (The dearest offspring are the offspring's offspring.)

38- Mediocrity:

مِش ولا بُد mish/mush wala budd (Mediocre/Not very good)

B- Unique Proverbs

Certain proverbs seem to be effectively expressed in its language. While approximate translation is possible, there is something culturally unique about a proverb and its purpose in the original language . The following proverbs are selected at random from Egyptian Arabic to illustrate the point.

1- الغايب حُجَتُه معاه 'ilgha:yib huggitu m`a:h (An absent person has his own excuse.) [To avoid blaming someone not present]

2- يقْتل القَتيل ويمْشي في جَنازتُه yi'til il'ati:l wiyimshi f ganaztu (He murders [someone] and goes to his funeral.) [To describe an extremely evil person]

3- لا منّه ولا كفاية شَرُّه la minnu wala kfa:yit sharru (He neither helps nor stops hurting.) [To describe an evil person]

4- الدُّنيا تَلاهي حَازوها الملاهي وسابوها كمَا هي 'iddunya tala:hi hazu:ha lmala:hi wisabu:ha kamahi (It is a world of distraction that fun lovers enjoy and leave it as it is.) [Life is not to be taken too seriously.]

5- من القَلْب للقلَب رَسول mil'alb lil 'alb rasu:l (Lit. From one heart to another there is a messenger. Close friends share the same thoughts.) [To indicate closeness and thinking of each other]

6- شَرْ البَليّة ما يُضْحك sharru lbaliyya ma yudhik (Extreme misfortune makes one laugh.) [Said of a strange /extreme misfortune]

7- المَعدَة بَيْت الدّاء 'ilmi`da baytu dda:' (The stomach is the root cause [Lit. house] of disease.) [to be careful about eating]

8- اللي يسْأل ما يتوهْش 'illi yis'al ma ytuhsh (He that asks does not get lost.) [To encourage inquiring about the way]

9- عَلّمْناهُم الشّحاتَه سَبقونا عَلي الأبْواب `allimnahum ishshiha:ta saba'u:na `al'abwa:b (We taught them how to beg and they were ahead of us [begging] at the doors.) [To describe someone stealing one's idea]

10- اللي ما يشْتري يتْفرّج 'illi ma yishtiri yitfarrag (He that is not buying may browse.) [To describe something worth seeing]

11- عِنْد الإمْتحان يُكْرَم المرْء أو يُهان `inda limtiha:n yukramu lmar'u 'aw yuha:n (At the test, a person may be honored or humiliated.) [On taking an important test / examination]

12- اللي مَالَك فيه ، ما تنْحشَرشي فيه 'illi ma:lak fi:h ma tinhasharshi fi:h (Don't meddle in what is none of your business./ Mind your own business.) [Blaming someone interfering in another person's affairs]

13- الخير عَلي قُدوم الوَاردين 'ilxe:r `ala 'udu:m ilwardi:n (Good things happen on the visitors' arrival.) [Welcoming visitor(s) coming at a good time]

14- الصّبْر طيّب 'issabr i tayyib (Patience is good.) [Asking someone to be patient / wait]

15- يا بَخْت مَن وفّق راسين في الحَلال ya baxti man waffa' rase:n filhala:l (He is lucky/blessed that makes a right match.) [Congratulating a match-maker]

C- Of Men, Women, Marriage and Love
(American English)

Proverbs can be a source of fun. They sometimes deal with serious issues such as marriage and love in a witty and humorous manner that may strike us as interesting and occasionally contradictory. The following select examples are taken from American English. They may be compared with the AE ones below.

1- Love intoxicates a man, marriage sobers him.

2- Love is the only fire against which there is no insurance.

3- Love makes time pass; time makes love pass.

4- A deaf husband and a blind wife are always a happy couple.

5- Men are like streetcars,there's always another coming along.

6- Never run after a woman or a streetcar: there'll be another along in a few minutes.

7- Once a woman has given you her heart, you can never get rid of the rest of her.

8- Men build houses; women build homes.

9- When a woman throws a man over, he usually lands on his knees to another woman.

10- There are two kinds of women: those who take what you are and those who take what you have.

11- Man works from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done.

12- Honest men marry soon, wise men not at all.

13- Men are what their mothers made them.

14- When a man marries, his life begins.

15- When a man marries, his troubles begin; when a man dies, his trouble ends.

16- Marriage is an institution for the blind.

17-To marry once is a mistake; to marry twice is fatal.

D- (Egyptian Proverbs)

The following Egyptian Arabic proverbs may be culturally compared with the previous (AE) ones.

18- الأم تْعشّش والأبّ يطفّش 'il'ummi t`ashshish wil'abb yiṭaffish (The mother gathers [the children] in the nest and the father kicks them out.

19- إيه يحرّر النّسا قال بُعْد الرّجال عَنهُم 'e:h yiḥarrar innisa 'a:l bu`d irriga:l `anhum (What liberates women? He said: Being away from men!)

20- جهنّم جُوزي ولا جنّة أبويا gihannam go:zi wala gannit 'abu:ya (I'd rather [endure] the hell of my husband than the heaven of my father.)

21- أنا وحبّيبي راضي وانْتَ مالك يا قاضي 'ana wḥabi:bi ra:ḍi winta malak ya 'a:ḍi (My love and I are satisfied; why do you meddle, judge?!)

22- بُوس إيد حَماتَك ولا تبوس مراتك bu:s 'i:d ḥama:tak wala tbu:s mra:tak (Rather than kiss your wife, kiss your mother-in-law's hand..)

23- جَوازه نُصْرانيّه لا فُراق إلا بالخنّاق gawa:za nu**s**raniyya la fura:' 'illa bilxunna: (A Christian marriage : no parting except through death.)

24- قِرْد موافق ولا غَزال شارِد 'ird mwa:fi' wala ghaza:l sha:rid (An ugly but accommodating wife rather than a beautiful but unruly one. [Lit. An agreeing mokey rather than an unruly gazelle.)

25- قلوب الرِّجال صَناديق مَقْفولَة 'ulu:b irriga:l **s**anadi:' ma'fu:la (Men's hearts are closed boxes.)

26- أوّل سُبوع يا عَروَسه خوخَه وتُفّاحَه وتاني سُبوع يا عروسه عَلي المحْكَمَه راحَه 'awwil subu:` ya `aru:sa xo:xa wituffa:**h**a wi ta:ni subu:` `almah**k**ama ra:**h**a (The first week the bride is sweet (lit.a peach and an apple); the second week the bride goes to court.)

27- خد الأصيلة ولو كانت علي الحصيرة xud il'a**s**i:la walaw kanit `ala l**h**a**s**i:ra (Take/Marry the good one even if she is poor [Lit. if she is on the mat].)

28- قالوا يا جحا فين بلدك ، قال اللي فيها مراتي 'a:lu ya go**h**a fe:n baladak 'a:l 'illi fi:ha mra:ti (They asked, "Go**h**a, where is your hometown?" He said, " It is where my wife is.")

29- عيش يا حبيبي ولا تبكيني ، حسك في الدنيا يكفيني `i:sh ya **h**abi:bi wala tbakki:ni **h**issak fiddunya yikfi:ni (Live on O my love and don't make me cry ; your being (lit. voice) in the world is enough for me.)

30- الأب عاشق والأم غيرانه ، والبنت حيرانه 'il'abbi `a:shi' wil'ummi ghayra:na wilbinti **h**ayra:na (The father is having an affair, the mother is jealous and the daughter is confused.)

E- Proverbial Expressions

Proverbial expressions-often metaphorical- not only effectively convey the meaning but also promptly trigger the native speakers' response. Like proverbs, they cover a wide range of notions and feelings. The following patterns are examples in both Egyptian Arabic and American English.

1- واقع لشوشْتُه في حُبّها wa:i` lishushtu f **h**ubbaha
(He's madly in love with her. / ...head over heels in love with her)

2- وَهْو كذلك ! wahwa kaza:lik (It's a deal !)

3- عَلي عِيني وراسي ! `ala `e:ni wr**a**:si (Certainly! / Gladly!)

4- سَاعة الحِساب sa:`it il**h**isa:b (Moment of truth)

5- الحق عليّ 'ilha''i `alayya (My fault !) 75

6- رجعت الميّه لمجاريها **rig`it ilmayya limagari:ha**
(Back to normal / Back on track)

7- زيّ العُقْلة في الزّور **zayy il`u'la fizzo:r (A pain in the neck)**

8- كَلام فارغ **kala:m fa:righ (Baloney ! / Nonsense! / Hogwash)**

9- كِلْمة يا ريت ما عَمّرت بيت **kilmit ya re:t ma `ammarit be:t**
(Wishful thinking !)

10- يابْن الإيه ! **yabn il'e:h (Son of a gun!)**

11- دمُّه خَفيف **dammu xafi:f (Cute / Sweet)**

12- حُمار شُغْل **<u>h</u>uma:r shughl (Workaholic)**

REFERENCES (Proverbs)

Abd-Assala:m, Hasan حَسن عَبْد السَّلام (1977?). *The Current Proverb and Human Behavior.* المثَل السَّائِر وسلوك الإنْسان Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop.

The proverbs are arranged according to topic. Similarity of proverbs among Arab countries is attributed to common ties in "language, religion, origin and close neighborhood".

Abu Sinna, M. I. محمّد ابْراهِيم أبو سِنَّه (No date) *Philosohy of the Popular Proverb.* Cairo: *Da:r ilka:tib il`arabi li<u>t</u>tiba:`a wannashr* دار الكاتِب العَربي للطِّباعَة والنَّشْر

The book provides a historical list of books on proverbs.

Al-Baqli, M. Qandi:l. محمد قنديل البقلي 1968. *The Unity of Colloquial Proverbs in Arab Countries.* وحْدَة الأمْثال العامِيَّة في البِلاد العَربيَّة Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop.

The work consists of eight chapters with the proverbs topically arranged.

Abu-Ali, M. Tawfi:q محمد توفيق أبو علي 1989. *Select Common Proverbs.* روائع الأمثال الشائعة Beirut: Da:r Al- Nafa'is Li<u>t</u>tiba:`ati Wannashr Wattawzi:` دار النفائس للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع

Proverbs in Arab countries are cosidered similar.

Burckhardt, John L. 1984. *Arabic Proverbs* ; or the manners and customs of the modern Egyptians. Illustrated from their proverbial sayings current at Cairo translated and explained. London: Curzon Press.

Burckhardt studied Arabic and became known as Sheikh (Ashshayx) Ibrahi:m. He based his work, which was written in March 1817, on an early eighteenth century collection by Sharaf Addi:n ibn Asad. The proverbs are sometimes rendered in formal Arabic and some of them are expressed in 'indelicate' language.

Ferguson, Rosalind. 1983. The Facts on File Dictionary of *Proverbs*. New York: Facts on File Publications.

Kin, David (Ed.). 1955. *Dictionary of American Proverbs*. New York: Philosophical Library.

(Arranged alphabetically according to topics and key words)

Mieder, Wolfgang, Stewart A. Kingsbury and Kelsie B. Harder (Eds.) 1992. *A Dictionary of American Proverbs*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This *Dictionary* is intended to be "a work of historical reference as well as a record of oral tradition". Based on field research, the work took about fifty years to complete and covers the United States and parts of Canada.

`We:s, Sayyid سيِّد عويس 1990. *Egyptian Proverbs and Popular Expressions.* أمْثال وتَعْبِيرات شَعْبيَّة مصْريَّة Cairo: Akhbar Ilyo:m Organization مُؤسَسة أخْبار اليوم (Issue#316 Dec. 1990).

The proverbs are numbered and topically arranged.

Sha`la:n, I. Ahmad. ابراهيم أحمد شعلان 1972. *The Egyptian People in their Colloquial Proverbs,* الشعْب المِصْري في أمْثَاله العَاميّة Cairo: General Egyptian Book Association الهَيْئَة المصْريّة العامَّة للكتاب

In this book, the index p.273 includes a list of the first parts of the proverbs topically arranged .

Simpson, John with the assistance of Jennifer Speake. 1992. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. Second Edition. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

This *Concise Dictionary*, which combines alphabetical and thematic arrangement, includes proverbs from North America and some proverbs of recent origin.

Taymu:r, Ahmad. 1970. الأمْثال العَامِيِّة *Colloquial Proverbs* Explained and alphabetically arranged. Third Edition. Cairo: Committee for Publishing Taymu:rean Works لجنة نشْر المؤلفات التيمورية

Taymu:r's work first appeared in 1949. It includes 3188 proverbs carefully presented in alphabetical order with their variants and original etymology.

Whiting, B.J. 1977. *Early American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Arranging Proverbs by Topics

To facilitate locating any of the first listed 685 proverbs, the main topics and key terms are arranged alphabetically. It should be noticed that the same proverb may be associated with more than one topic. For example, the proverb #116 is listed under Fate and Marriage.

Advice 9 15, 80, 194, 202, 204, 206, 215, 219, 221, 229, 235, 237, 259, 421, 473, 477, 493, 574, 612 628, 634, 640, 662,668
Appearances 47, 94, 519, 521, 592, 618, 650, 668
Beauty 53
Begging 179
Cause 1, 96, 333, 459, 582
Charity 136, 212, 265, 287, 319, 608
Children 297
Choice 9, 287, 291, 598
Confession 467, 638
Content 439,449, 525
Cooperation 25, 100, 223, 279, 390
Dishonesty 57, 130, 152, 523, 556. 570
Education (See also Learning.) 676 , 678
Envy 325

Evil 55 327, 402, 527, 537, 554, 578, 586
Exaggeration 3
Expectation 263, 435, 509
Experience 487, 543
Faith 349, 365, 392, 610, 612
Fate 41, 43, 45, 116, 124, 181, 199, 208, 217, 239, 247, 251, 275, 283, 431, 529, 594, 664
Fault finding 408, 614
Food 676
Favor 51, 279, 321, 427
Fortune (See Fate.)
Frienship 13, 29, 37, 63, 68, 90, 195, 261, 396, 398, 515
Fun 493, 501, 646
Futility 552
Gratitude 82
Greed 233, 307, 410
Habit 361,367, 572, 656
Haste 339, 449, 600, 616, 620
Health 106, 241, 451, 564
Hope 140, 177, 620
Hypocrisy 543
Hunger 21, 86, 88, 255, 299, 445,676
Inconsistency 509
Individuality 146, 371, 418, 481, 602
Justification 11, 39, 51, 670
Kindness 658
Learning (See also Education) 61, 70, 84, 108, 132, 134, 135, 166, 168, 191, 273, 287, 291, 293, 418, 479, 568
Love 7, 29, 31, 33, 53, 72, 78, 257, 321 329, 421, 457, 626
Luck 41, 45, 116, 247, 283, 353, 594, 664
Marriage 116, 616, 640, 666, 682
Misfortune 5, 277, 309, 310, 355, 359, 392, 414, 441, 495, 648
Money 172, 173, 175, 201, 213, 227, 335, 341, 341, 343, 404, 405, 439, 505, 612
Mothers (see Women.)
Neighbors 253, 271
Occasion 672
Opportunity 9, 594

Optimism 374, 376, 511
Paradox 74, 323, 327, 372, 471, 509, 558, 580, 596, 604, 606
Patience 23, 98, 102, 170, 183, 249, 267, 295, 315, 359, 363, 365, 386, 388, 425, 525, 547, 556, 574, 624, 648, 650
Patriotism 104, 433,
Praise 243, 461
Procrastination 662
Relatives 112, 114, 138,
Revenge 429, 498
Strategy 578, 590, 594, 634
Surprise 17
Sympathy 570
Wisdom 19, 39, 191, 291, 380, 382,409, 412, 477, 479,467, 558, 574, 636, 658
Wishfulness 21
Women 337, 357, 416, 437, 534, 535, 656
Work 27, 35, 59, 160, 299, 369, 394, 425, 447, 483, 455, 465, 503, 509, 562, 598, 630

Metaphors in Egyptian Arabic

Egyptian Arabic is rich in metaphorical usage which covers both similes and metaphors. Some of the metaphors are shared with American English. For example, the English expression " He has a kind heart." bears resemblance to the Arabic pattern *'albu_ṭayyib* قلبُه طيب. However, the use of the term "heart" in English is often different from that in Arabic. Such expressions as " take heart ; take to heart " can pose a problem to an Egyptian learning English. Furthermore, the meaning can be the opposite in the two languages. For example, in English when you say "She is the chair." you usually mean something nice. The same expression literally translated to Arabic is an insult. Command of metaphorical use may thus be indicative of laanguage competence.

With language contact, some metaphors may be borrowed from one language by another. A recent example of this is the famous metaphor used during the Gulf war of 1990, namely "mother of all battles". There are also metaphors that become common through the media and influential religious or literary sources. But each language has its distinctive metaphors.

In Egyptian Artabic (EA), we may consider some of the basic categories in this regard.
A- Body parts : head, heart, liver, eye, hand, arm, finger, foot, face, blood, tooth, etc.
B- Animals and birds : lion, cat, dog, fox, camel, donkey, owl, mokey, snake, sheep ...
C- Things: book, chair, watch/clock, pen, sword, iron, gold, sun, moon, star, honey, lemon, sugar, flower ...

Expressions with terms for body parts
Examples: Expressions with the term *`e:n* (عين) eye
1- *`al `e:n wirra:s* (علي العين والراس) gladly, most certainly
(Lit. on the eye and the head)

2- *min `enayya litnein* (من عينيّا الإتنين) certainly, I'll be happy to do it. (Lit. from both my eyes)

3- *`e:ni `e:nak* (عيني عينك) defiantly

4- *'il `e:n ma ti`la:sh `alḥa:gib* (العين ما تعلاش عن الحاجب) proverb: One should not defy one's superior. (Lit. The eye cannot be higher than the eyebrow.)

5- *ya `e:ni `ale:* (يا عيني عليه) An expression of pity usually used by women (Lit. O my eye is on him !)

6- *yiṭalla` `ene:* (يطلّع عينيه) to make someone suffer (Lit. take his eyes out)

7- *`e:n figganna wi `e:n finna:r* (عين في الجنّه وعين في النار) hesitant between two choices (Lit. one eye in heaven and one eye in hell)

8- *'il`e:n `ale:ha ḥa:ris* (العين عليها حارس) The eye is protected. (Lit. the eye has a guard on it.)

9- *`e:nu 'arḥa* (عينه قارحه) impudent m. (Lit. His eye is defiant.)

10- *`e:n ilḥurri miza:n* (عين الحرّ ميزان) The just man's estimate is accurate. (Lit. The free man's eye is a scale.)

11- *huwwa b`e:nu* (هوّ بعينه) he himself/ the very same (Lit. he with his eye)

12- *`ala `e:nak ya ta:gir* (علي عينك يا تاجر) deliberately (Lit. on your eye O merchant)

13- *ya le:li ya `e:ni* (يا ليلي يا عيني) a common song refrain (Lit. O my night O my eye)

14- *`e:nu fikkita:b* (عينه في الكتاب) He wants/likes the book. (Lit. His eye is on the book.)

15- *xalli `ene:k mifattaḥa* (خلّي عينيك مفتّحه) Keep your eyes open/Keep watch ! (Lit. Keep your eyes open!)

Expressions with the term *'alb* (قلب) heart:

1- *sa:`a li'albak wi sa:`a lrabbak* (ساعه لقلبك وساعه لربّك) Time for fun and time for seriousness (Lit. One hour for

your heart and one hour for your God)
2- *m il'alb lil'alb rasu:l* (من القلب للقلب رسول) There is common understanding/love. (Lit. There is a messenger from heart to heart.) Cf. AM E "There is a road from heart to heart."
3- *'il'ulu:b `andi ba`ḏaha* (القلوب عند بعضها) People share love /sympathy. (Lit. Hearts are with each other.)
4- *'albak dali:lak* (قلبك د ليلك) Your intuition is on target. (Lit. Your heart is your guide.)
5- *'albu ra'i:'* (قلبه رقيق) He is kind/sensitive. (Lit. His heart is tender.)

Expressions with the term *'i:d* (إيد) hand:
1- *'i:du ṯawi:la* (إيده طويله) He steals. (Lit. His hand is long.)
2- *'i:du xafi:fa* (إيده خفيفه) He steals. (Lit. His hand is light.)
3- *'il'i:d 'aṣi:ra wil`e:n baṣi:ra* (الإيد قصيره والعين بصيره) An expression meaning that one is helpless. (Lit. The hand is short and the eye sees[that].)
4- *'i:di fi: 'i:dak* (إيدي في إيدك) Let us cooperate /work together. (Lit. My hand is in your hand.)
5- *'i:di `ala riglak* (إيدي علي رجلك) It is a deal/ Let us do it. (Lit. My hand is on your leg.)
6- *'i:dak minnu wil'arḏ* (إيدك منّه والأرض) He is no good/ He is not to be trusted. (Lit. Your hand from him and the ground.)

Expressions with the term *damm* (دم) blood:
1- *dammu xafi:f / sharba:t* (دمّه خفيف / شربات) He is cute / attractive / likable. (Lit. His blood is light / sherbet.)
2- *dammu ti'i:l* (دمّه تقيل) He is a bore.[Lit. His blood is heavy.]

3- *ma `andu:sh damm* (ما عندوش دم) He is insensitive. (Lit. He has no blood.)
4- *'iddamm ma yib'a:sh mayya* (الدمْ ما يبقاش ميه) Blood is thicker than water. (Lit. Blood does not become water.)

Expressions with terms for animals:
While some animals have practically the same connotation in different cultures such as lion, tiger, fox and elephant, there are some important cultural differences in usage.
1- Owl: *bu:ma* in Egyptian Arabic connotes ugliness and ill luck e.g., *hiyya bu:ma* (هيْ بومه) implies that she is ugly/ brings bad luck. (Lit. She is an owl.)
2- Dog: *kalb* in Ar. connotes unholiness, uncleanliness and submissive ness. It is sometimes used rather impolitely to refer to a person as a *kalb* "a dog" or *ibn kalb* "son of a dog".
3- Donkey: *humaːr* in *huwwa humaːr* (هوْ حمار) He is stupid.(Lit. He is a donkey.) Another expression : *huwwa humaːr shughl* (هو حمار شغل) He is workaholic. (Lit. He is a work donkey.)
4- Cat: *'utta* in *`amal 'utta* He acted like a coward/chicken. (Lit. He acted as a cat.)

C- Expressions with common words for things:
1- *saː`a* (watch, clock) : *'aːxir saːa* (آخر ساعه) stop press (Lit. last hour)
2- *saː`a li'albak wi saː`a lirabbak* (See expressions with *'alb* heart.)
3- *saː`aːt saː`aːt* (ساعات ساعات) sometimes (Lit. hours hours)
4- *saː`it--ha yihillaha rabbak* At that time the problem may be solved. (Lit. Its hour your God will solve it.)
5- *saː`it ilhazz ma tit`awwadsh* Fun time may never come again.
(Lit. The hour of fun cannot be made up for.)
6- *zayy issaː`a* (زيْ الساعه) punctual / on time (Lit. like a clock/watch) .

Expressions related to *mayya* (water):

1- *yighra' fi shibri mayya* يغرق في شبر ميه He gets lost easily. (Lit. He drowns in a a little bit of water.)

2- ra:h fi sharbit mayya راح في شربة ميه He soon died. (Lit. He was gone in a drink of water.)

3- *yibi:` ilmayya fi ha:rit issa''ayyi:n* يبيع الميه في حارة السقايين He offers what others do not need. (Lit. He sells water on the water-carriers street.)

4- *yiwaddi:h ilbahr wiyragga`u `atsha:n* يوديه البحر ويرجعه عطشان He is very cunning. (Lit. He would take him to the river[water] and bring him back thirsty.)

5- *'illi mayi`gibu:sh yishrab milbahr* It does not matter if he does not like that.(Lit. He that does not like it, let him drink from the river.)

Some Concepts in Metaphors:

It should be remembered that looking for synonyms across languages can be misleading. However, for convenience, reference is made to approximate concepts or categories.

1-Small is bad and big is good.In Arabic the word كبير *kabi:r/kibi:r* has more than one meaning, namely big, old, important. Thus, *ra:gil kibi:r* may mean an old or important man.

`e:la kbi:ra عيله كبيره A good / well-known family (Lit. a big family)

`a'lu kbi:r عقله كبير He has a good mind. (Lit.His mind is big.)

`a'lu sghayyar عقله صغير He is childish. (lit. His mind is small.)

2- Hot is strong/ intense and cold is insensitive

'il 'as`a:r wil`a الأسعار ولعه The prices are very high. (Lit. The prices are very hot.)

shaxs ba:rid شخص بلرد An insensitive person (Lit. A cold person)

3- Empty is worthless and full is good.

kala:m fa:d/i fa:righ كلام فاضي nonsense (Lit. empty words)
ra:gil malya:n راجل مليان A rich/ importantworthy man

Euphemisms

Euphemisms , the substitution of pleasant words for unpleasant or socially awkward ones, may make use of metaphors. They are used with reference to such topics as death, dirt and sex.
Thus, in referring to a dead person, the term often used is *'ilmarhu:m (m.)* or *'ilmarhu:ma* (f.) [Lit. the one that has been given mercy] When asked about a person who has just 'passed away' , the response may be *ti`i:sh inta* تعيش انت (Lit. May you live !) Other similar expressions include *'il`umr ittawi:l lak* العُمر الطويل لك (Lit. May you live long!) and *haya:tak ilba'ya* حياتك الباقيه (Lit. Your life is the one remaining.)

Some Common Patterns for Social Occasions:

Greetings 1. *'ahlan wasahlan* أهلاً وسهلاً
2. *('is)sala:mu `ale:kum* السلام عليكم
(Formal)

Good morning 1. *saba:h ilxe:r* صباح الخير

Good evening 1. *masa:' ilxe:r* مساء الخير

On Parting (Good-by) 1. *ma`a ssala:ma* مع السلامه

On the occasion of a feast, birthday or an annual celebration

1. *kulli sana winta tayyib /bixe:r* (m.) كل سنه وانت طيب/ بخير
kulli sana winti tayyiba / bixe:r (f.) كل سنه وانت طيبه/ بخير
kulli sana wintum/tayyibi:n bixe:r(pl.) كل سنه وانتم طيبين/بخير

(Please note that the last pattern may be used in place of the three expressions above.)

Thanks — 1. *ma`a shshukr / shukran / merci:* مرسي شكراً مع الشكر

How are you? — 1. *'izzayak (m.) 'izzayyik (f.) 'izzay ilḥa:l* إزاي الحال ؟

Response — 2. *`a:l ilḥamdu lilla:h* عال... الحمْدُ لله

Thanks for hospitality — 1. *dayman `a:mir* دايماً عامِر

Invitation to sit, eat, come in — 1. *'itfaddal m. 'itfaddali f. 'itfaddalu pl.* إتفضل إتفضلي إتفضلوا

Congratulations! — 1. *mabru:k* مبروك

Sorry! — 1. *'a:sif (m.)* آسف / *'asfa ((f.)* آسفه

2. *la mu'axza* لا مُؤاخْذَه

Forget about it/ Never mind — 1. *ma`lihsh* مَعلِهش

Pay attention! — 1. *xud ba:lak* خُد بالَك (m.)

xudi ba:lik خُدِي بالِك (f.)

Be patient ! / Wait a second!

ṣabrak ! (m.) صبَرك

ṣabrik! (f.) ! صبِرك

Hello ! — 1. *'alo:* آلو !

(In answering the telephone)

Yes / I will — 1. *ḥa:ḍir* حاضِر

OK (agreeing) — 2. *wahwa kaza:lik* وهو كذلك

(In response to a request/command)

No ! 1. *la'* لأ

Please (e.g. open the door) 1. *min fa<u>d</u>lak* (m.) مِن فضلَك

min fa<u>d</u>lik(f.) مِن فضلِك

2. *law samah<u>t</u>* (m.) لو سَمحت

law samah<u>t</u>i (f.) لو سمحتِ

(These expressions may be used by hemselves or before a request.)

Conclusion:

In discussing Egyptian Arabic, attention has been focused on a selected number of aspects, namely the main language characteristics, humor, proverbs, metaphors, euphemisms and common expressions.These aspects can certainly be more fully developed but the idea is to represent the major features of the language in their cultural context. Arabic script is used to show how the native speaker reads the patterns while transliteration is provided to enable the English

speaker to pronounce them. At the same time, reference to American English is added to enhance the understanding of the linguistic as well as the cultural similaries and differences.